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THE

ROMAN NIGHTS;

OR,

DIALOGUES

AT THE

TOMBS OF THE SCIPIOS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF

COUNT VERRI.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE very favourable reception given on the Continent to the Work of which the following Translation is offered to the Public, was the first inducement to this attempt to clothe it in an English dress. That the Translator has, in all respects, done justice to his Original, is what he is far from presuming to hope: yet he flatters himself that the pains he has bestowed upon this his first attempt, will meet with sufficient encouragement to induce him to exert himself to the utmost of his power, to acquire, at some future time, a juster claim to the approbation of the Public.

August 1, 1798.

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ERRATUM.

Page 150, line 1, after *some*, insert *time*.

ERRATA.

Page 20, line 8, for *Arpinæ*, read *Arpinum*.
—— 21, — 15, for *merit*, read *permit*,
—— 43, — ult. and passim, for *Comitii*, read *Comitia*.
—— 47, — 16, after *Romans*, read *Pompey beheaded by traitors, the good in exile*, &c.
—— 51, — penult. for *Numidius*, read *Numidicus*.
—— 148, — 3, for *Marius*, read *Marcus*.
—— 150, — 1, after *fame*, insert *time*.
—— 290, — antepenult, after *art*, insert *not*.
—— 325, — penult. dele *be*.

THE
ROMAN NIGHTS.

FIRST NIGHT.

INTRODUCTION.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORK.

FROM the time that my ſoul firſt began to expand itſelf in ſtudying the writings of the Ancients, and I became acquainted with the nobleneſs of their ſtyle, as well as the grandeur of their enterpriſes, I was ſtruck with ſuch aſtoniſhment, that my mind was wholly abſorbed in the contemplation of thoſe remote ages. But among all the Nations of antiquity, Rome,

like ſome mighty giant, towers above the reſt, by the daring greatneſs of her enterpriſes, and by the ſublime pre-eminence of her heroic genius. Hence long habit had ſo turned my thoughts to the Romans, that I conſidered them as preſent in the depths of ſolitude. As I wandered through the ſilent foreſts, or beſide the plaintive ſtreams, my ſoul, abſorbed in ſuch contemplations, ſeemed impatiently to throw off the cumbrous load of the body, and ſeek, with eager flight, the diſtant regions of antiquity. And ſo much did ſtudy increaſe this diſpoſition in me, that my breaſt was ſometimes inflamed with the ſtrange and tormenting deſire of ſeeing and converſing with the Spirit of ſome diſtinguiſhed Ancient, by calling it up from the abyſs of death; which ſame anxiety was formerly felt by the illuſtrious Petrarch, exciting him to leap over the interpoſed ages, and in ſome meaſure to live with the Ancients: for he wrote letters to Cicero, to Seneca, to Livy and to Varro, which are ſtill to be ſeen

amon

among his works. And it is related of Pomponius Letus, that living in Rome, and being deeply verſed in the knowledge of antiquity, he was uſed to contemplate, with ſuch a ſenſe of delightful admiration, every relic of ancient grandeur, that he was frequently ſeen to weep over the ruins, and to ſtand motionleſs in obſerving them, his thoughts buried in ecſtatic meditation. I therefore, being deſirous of affording my heart that ſweet ſatisfaction after which it ſighed, departed from the Inſubrian Plains towards majeſtic Rome, the perpetual object of my contemplations.

Whoever has taſted the charms of ancient erudition, will acknowledge the emotions that agitate the breaſt, when, as we deſcend the Appennines, the road declines towards that celebrated City. The eye is eager to diſcover the ſummits of the ſeven hills; the heart wiſhes to expand itſelf amongſt the precious monuments; every ſtone of an ancient building on the road

affords matter for learned conjectures and delightful images. When I entered the Flaminian Way, I called to mind its ancient magnificence from Rimini to the city, and the name it still retains of that Consul, who died for his country in the battle against Hannibal at the Thrasymenian Lake. While I was filled with these fascinating ideas, I passed through the majestic gate; so noble an entrance appearing to support that pleasing illusion in my mind, which made me think I was going into the vast and marble city of Augustus. In proportion as the heart overflows with pleasure, does the difficulty of adequately expressing it increase. I must therefore pass over in silence the emotions I experienced when I for the first time beheld the sacred Tiber, the Egyptian Obelisks; the Temples, yet black with the smoke of the sacrifices; the Flavian Amphitheatre, which lies like a dismembered giant; the Columns which represent the exercises of the soldiers, the Triumphal Arches, the Forum, the

the Mausoleums, the majestic ruins of the Circus's and of the Baths, and all those remains of Roman magnificence, which fill the mind with pleasing astonishment.

It was that season of the year when the showers renovate the earth after the heat of summer. The sky cleared of clouds appears of a more resplendent azure; the drooping plants and the grass recover their verdure, and their freshness rivals the opening spring. To the shrill note of the grasshopper, had succeeded the joyful warbling of the birds, who sported in the cool air, ignorant of the snares which in this season are laid for them by our destructive pleasures. A report was at this time spread through the city, of a discovery which had just been made of the sepulchres of the Scipios, which for a long time had been sought in vain. Upon this, leaving every other object, I immediateiy turned all my thoughts upon them. The monuments of illustrious men are wont to

infuse into the mind a soothing melancholy, far more grateful than the bustle of tumultuous joy, to those whose hearts are inclined to pensive tranquillity. Already the veil of night covering the air, produced that calm and silence which suited my design. A rural habitation rises over the tombs of the Scipio's, to which we pass through a subterraneous cavern, which seems like a covert for wild beasts. By this narrow, and rather steep passage, I arrived at the monuments of the Heroic Race; some were just cleared from the ruins, and some still remained buried beneath them. I saw their illustrious bones, confusedly mixed with stones and clods of earth, whiten at the light of the torch which I held in my hand, to guide my steps. I then slowly turned it round on every side, considering how these remains, worthy of being inclosed in alabaster, were now rudely turned up by the *pick-axe*, and become the sport of the vulgar and the curious. But learned travellers who are used to flock together,

to

to contemplate with delight this city, ſhowed the value they ſet upon ſuch precious relics: many collected fragments of them, to carry to their diſtant homes, where they preſerved them out of reſpect for ſo diſtinguiſhed a family. Illuſtrious foreign ladies, incited by this report, not only wearied their tender feet, by expoſing them to the inconveniences and difficulties of theſe rugged caverns, but with their fair hands gathered together theſe melancholy teſtimonies of human frailty. I too conſidered with grief, how I walked over the bones of thoſe who ſtill filled the world with their fame; and how, perhaps, the victorious arm of one, or the proud head of another, was here trampled under foot, broken, and deſpiſed.

Theſe tombs, venerable for their modeſty, were erected at a time when the Romans did not deſire to be diſtinguiſhed for their magnificence, but for their virtue; compoſed of mean ſtone, and rudely carved,

the names and the exploits, though painted in fading colours, ſtill remain viſible, happily not effaced by the revolution of ſo many ages. Theſe inſcriptions relate, in ſhort and unadorned ſentences, the actions of that illuſtrious family; and the words are the ancient language of Latium in all its ſimplicity. Behold, ſaid I to myſelf, where ſtill riſes the monument of Caius Ceſtius, whoſe actions are ſo unknown to fame, that we in vain ſeek for them in hiſtory. The proud tomb has with difficulty tranſmitted to us his bare name, unaccompanied with glory. O Fortune! why haſt thou taken a barbarous pleaſure in diſturbing theſe glorious aſhes, after having for ſo many ages preſerved them beneath ruins?

While my mind was immerſed in theſe conſiderations, the night air ruſhing ſuddenly through the mouth of the cavern, extinguiſhed with its envious breath the torch in my hand. Though its malice, by thus ſtriking me as it were with ſudden

blindneſs,

blindneſs, deprived me of the pleaſure of viewing thoſe objects, yet it did not afflict me; for what my ſight had loſt, was gained by my mind, which became more thoughtful in that ſilence and ſolitude. Already my ſoul had plunged itſelf into the dark abyſs, already my thoughts deſcended to the gloomy regions of Death, and, according to their old cuſtom, were eager to converſe with the ſpirits of the departed; when, behold, I heard a plaintive murmur, compoſed of ſlow and inarticulate ſounds, iſſue from the depths of the cavern; it was like the wind that whiſpers in the valley: at the ſame time the earth trembled under my feet, and a noiſe was heard in the duſky air like the humming of a ſwarm of bees — the bones were agitated within the tombs, and ſtriking the ſides ſounded like the fallen branches of Autumn beneath the ſtartling ſtep of the benighted wanderer. Methought that the tops of the tombs roſe up a little, and then fell back to their former poſition; for I heard,

amidſt the darkneſs, a ſound like that which would proceed from ſuch a cauſe. Then human weakneſs prevailed in me over generous ardour, and I felt a cold chill run through all my limbs, for which no reflecting perſon will blame me, conſidering that I was then expoſed to a trial, too great for the ordinary firmneſs of our minds. The air then became ſilent, and the earth ceaſed to tremble. A phoſphoric light ſhone within the tombs, out of which ſome human figures began ſlowly to ariſe; their arms appeared ſupporting the ſuperincumbent coverings; and then I ſaw all the tombs laid quite open, and full of ſpirits, which, ſtanding upright in them, ſhowed only the upper part of their figure. There were children and youths, whoſe heads only, with part of the breaſt, were to be ſeen: ſome were the forms of men, and theſe were viſible even to the middle. The modeſt countenances of the matrons were covered with their veils; only ſome of them ſhewed a little of their

face,

face, by lifting up the edge with their hand. The heads of ſome of the young perſons were ſo covered with hair, that it hid their faces: ſome divided it with their hand in the middle of the forehead; and others threw it back upon their ſhoulders. The baldneſs and grey hairs of ſome, ſhewed that they had departed in advanced years. The young women who had died in the ſpring of life, had their countenances ſtill blooming, though ſomething obſcured by the melancholy lethargy of death. All theſe images had, at firſt, their eyelids half-cloſed, and, as it were, weighed down with eternal ſleep: then raiſing them with difficulty, they ſlowly turned their eyes towards me. They remained in this manner, ſcarcely yet awake, when I ſaw the phoſphoric light ſhine in the moſt remote part of the cavern, and a ſpirit, like the figures of the Conſuls, clothed in a white *toga*, approach with majeſtic ſteps. His benign countenance, animated by mild dignity, indicated that time of life which declines

declines towards old-age, but has not yet reached it: his ſight alone excited reſpect, and awakened aſtoniſhment. At his appearance all the reſt came out of the tombs, and approached him with manifeſt tokens of reverence. They ſent forth a murmuring ſound, reſembling groans which I am unable to expreſs. They then placed themſelves round him in a liſtening attitude: he ſtood in the middle, with an air of authority; and I remained eagerly attentive, leaning on a tomb. Aſtoniſhment and reverence not only reſtrained my ſpeech, but even made me fearful of drawing my breath.

FIRST DIALOGUE.

Previous Discourse with that distinguished Shade.—Its figure described: and the occasion of the assembling of the Spectres.

THE Shade began in a grave, authoritative, and deliberate manner, to address the surrounding multitude, who stood in different attitudes of respectful attention; and I listened with such eagerness, that all the faculties of my soul seemed absorbed in that of hearing. At first it appeared to me that I was unacquainted with the language, and I was grieved at not being able to understand it. But afterwards the recurrence of the same cadences, and of the corresponding sounds striking my ears, I shortly discovered that it was Latin, though pronounced something differently from what

is the mode at preſent; ſo that I very ſoon could underſtand it, to my great ſatisfaction. He was diſcourſing on the immenſity of the heavens, throughout which are diſperſed innumerable ſtars; he appeared to me to deſcribe alſo their magnitudes and diſtances. He diſplayed the wonderful productions of the ſupreme and eternal cauſe, which are manifeſted in the incomprehenſible greatneſs of the univerſe; but he lamented his inability to find words adequate to praiſe the creative mind, there being no method of honouring it, ſo ſuitable as a profound and ſilent admiration. He then appeared to me to relate his own celeſtial wanderings among the ſpheres, as if he had diligently contemplated the plan of ſo magnificent a ſtructure. Then turning his diſcourſe upon intelligent beings, he ſhowed how abject is every material ſubſtance, in compariſon with them; ſo that he conſidered his mortal life, when his ſoul was involved in clay, as an empty dream;

dream; and I ſeveral times heard him call all human learning, by the name of ignorance. His language flowed like a broad river with majeſtic current, to which the harmony and magnificence of his words added dignity and ſplendour. Afterwards, in a more ſublime and exalted ſtyle, he diſcourſed upon virtue; in which part of his ſubject, the countenance of the Spectre appeared more contemplative, as if he were impreſſed by the moſt lofty ideas. His voice was at firſt depreſſed, then exalted, at one time ſlow, at another animated, now calm, and then threatening, in conformity to the variety of his thoughts. He ſhewed that all human virtues are only imperfect imitations, in compariſon of that which is eternal: that, like gems ſurrounded with clay, they ſhine with a falſe luſtre, or are ſometimes confounded with the contrary vices, or are conſtrained to follow the variable current of opinion; that perfect virtue is one alone, eternal, immutable, invincible, divine. He then exhorted thoſe diſconſolate Spirits not

to ſigh after their loſt mortal life, nor to lament at ſeeing here the remains of the frail covering with which they were there incumbered; but exalting their ideas to contemplate the wonders of Heaven, and the magnificence of the Divinity, to bear with magnanimity the irrevocable decree which had releaſed them for the enjoyment of immortality.

While he was thus diſcourſing, all the Spectres liſtened to him with the moſt profound ſilence. Thoſe who had a manly and warlike appearance ſeemed ſatisfied with his philoſophical arguments; but the countenances of the women and children, on the contrary, wore an expreſſion of ſadneſs, and their ſighs indicated that they wiſhed for a renewal of their mortal exiſtence; but the inviolable boundary reſtrained them. The poor little infants ſtretched out their arms to their mothers; and theſe again, with human ſenſibility, preſſed their offspring to their breaſt, and

and seemed sorrowfully to be seeking for the light of heaven. Struck with compassion and astonishment, I hardly knew whether I were alive and on this earth, my senses being wholly bewildered by those figures, and by those words. I heard now, with inexplicable delight, the sound of the ancient language, and no longer doubted but that this was the illustrious spirit of some Roman Orator. But as soon as he ceased speaking, the Spectres who had been listening to him, returned again to their tombs, leaving by himself the one who had been speaking. I then advanced into the midst, and feeling my courage exalted to an unusual height, by the powers of that stupendous eloquence, turning towards the Spectre, in the Latin language, in the best manner I was able, I addressed him thus: "Hail! whoever thou art, that with such lofty eloquence discoursest on subjects too abstruse for the weakness of my understanding! Although I am incapable of fully comprehending thy sublime notions,

yet I perceive that, in our world, thou muſt have poſſeſſed a tongue not only eloquent, but divine. Thou ſeeſt that the incumbrance of theſe limbs renders my thoughts mean: thine, on the contrary, freed from ſuch a load, exalt themſelves towards Heaven like elemental fire. But if human intreaties have any influence over thee, I conjure thee to deſcend a little from the ſublimity of thy ſpeculations, and to converſe with me in a manner ſuitable to my weakneſs. Thy language flows with celeſtial harmony, and ſhines with the ſplendour of eternal knowledge. Mine is but as the prattling of infants in compariſon of thine; deign, therefore, to lower thyſelf to my human imbecility, that I may be able to boaſt of having converſed with an incorporeal being. Ah! if the rigorous laws of death are compatible with ſuch a requeſt, reveal to me, if thou wert a mortal like us, as thy appearance indicates, where, when, thou ſaweſt our ſun, and what was thy name, which I con-

jectured

jecture thou haſt left behind thee, illuſtrious and immortal."

I was ſilent; and he, with an air of benignity, fixed his eyes upon me; he then ſmiled, but without leſſening the dignity of his countenance, ſhewing an obliging compliance with my requeſt. He now queſtioned me: "On what account art thou here watching in the ſilence of death, when thy fellow mortals are lying in calm oblivion of their cares?" I humbly replied; "I am here amidſt theſe illuſtrious remains, and am kept here by the deſire of contemplating them, no leſs than by admiration of thoſe virtues which diſtinguiſhed them when alive. I am continually intent upon them, and their greatneſs ſo occupies my mind, that it has no room for other thoughts." At theſe words his countenance became more ſerene; and having regarded me for ſome time with a benevolent air, he aſked me: "If it were now granted to thee to converſe with any Roman, whom wouldſt thou wiſh firſt to ſee?"

fee?" I, as a point on which my mind had long ago decided, immediately replied, "Marcus Tullius Cicero." At this anſwer, which I gave without the ſmalleſt heſitation, the Spectre, as moved by paternal kindneſs, ſuddenly exclaimed with modeſt pleaſure, "I am he; I am the inſignificant inhabitant of Arpinæ whom thou ſeekeſt." How ſhall I expreſs the delight that overflowed my breaſt, at this unhoped-for anſwer? I remained ſilent and perplexed, as at unexpected intelligence; I then flew towards the Spectre, and ſeveral times ſtrove to embrace him with affectionate reverence; but my arms returned empty to my breaſt; he was, however, pleaſed by my reſpectful deſires. When the firſt torrent of ſatisfaction was a little calmed, I attentively conſidered that forehead, which was impreſſed with the treaſures of learning; thoſe eloquent lips, which ſo liberally imparted them to others; that hand, which had guided the golden ſtyle; that breaſt, which had contained a heart ſo heroic for its country, ſo tender for its friends.

friends. I am very ſorry that regard to truth obliges me to deprive of a pleaſing miſtake, thoſe who imagine themſelves to poſſeſs, either on gems or in buſts, the likeneſs of ſo great a man; for none of them at all reſemble him. Never did I ſo regret my want of ſkill, either with the chiſel, or the pencil, ſo that I might be able to repreſent thoſe features, as I did on this incredible occaſion, by which I alone, among mortals, had an opportunity of ſatisfying the general wiſh; but ſince I can do it no other way, I will endeavour to ſupply the defect by words, and deſcribe his perſon, as well as the mediocrity of my ſtyle will merit. The courſe of mature years ſeemed completed in his countenance: he was rather thin, as one who minded not ſenſual pleaſures, attending only to the intellectual. A mild gravity indicated a mind accuſtomed to long meditations; but an agreeable modeſty appeared, at the ſame time, to conceal the abundance of his learning. His hair, ſomewhat thin, and here and there grey,

was cut in an unſtudied manner round his head; his forehead, wrinkled between the eye-brows, ſhowed that they had often been uſed to contract themſelves in profound ſpeculations: his eyes, large, and ſlow in their motion, ſhone with a kind of dazzling light, which I know not whether they poſſeſſed when living; the eyebrows hung over them, large, arched, and hairy: his cheeks were rather pale, his mouth ſomething large, his lips ſwelling, eſpecially the lower one; his chin well proportioned: when he was not ſpeaking, he frequently reſted it on his left hand; and therefore Plutarch related the truth, who, in the life of ſo illuſtrious a man, thought it worth while to mention this his accuſtomed attitude. He was above the middle ſize; his dreſs was the white *toga*. While ſpeaking, he varied the tone of his voice, and adjuſted his figure in various elegant poſitions, ſuitable to his language: and I perceived how certain it was, that he had formed his declamation after the manner of the tragic

actors;

actors; for, being now violent, and now varying with gentle inflexions, it was supported by common or dignified attitudes, conformably to the subject which agreement filled the heart with so sweet a fascination, that it was led to yield on easy assent. Oh! happy studies, which have enabled me to leap over the bounds of time, and to see, hear, and converse with the incomparable orator!

I remained in the mean time motionless, overpowered by a delicious enchantment, contemplating his figure; and he, permitting me to satiate my greedy eyes, observed a dignified silence. But soon the desire of conversing with him awoke afresh, and I began:—" I would not wish, O distinguished mind, to disturb thy eloquence, or that tranquillity, of what nature soever it be, that is granted to you, illustrious Spirits, in this abyss of death! Thy silence, however, though full of dignity, fills my mind with sadness, and thy awful presence makes my

my heart palpitate. Ready as thou always wert, in life, to defend the innocent with thy illuſtrious eloquence, conſtant to thy friends, uſeful and faithful to thy country, full of mild benevolence towards thy relations, gentle in thy manners, ſublime in thy learning, I may hope that thou ſtill preſerveſt theſe virtues, which belong to the ſoul, and are not thrown off with the body. Oh! then ſpeak, and let me imbibe from the fountain-head the pure ſtream of thy eloquence!" At which requeſt he ſeemed to feel a degree of pleaſure, and anſwered:—"Much more eaſily than I could ever have believed, O kind and magnanimous mortal, doſt thou converſe with me in our language. Certainly it is an extraordinary circumſtance, that the deſtructive torrent of twenty ages ſhould not have carried off with it this language. I am affected by thy generous purpoſe, which gives thee courage to converſe with Spectres, which are uſed ſo to diſturb the imaginations of men, that in all nations they have

have been continually the occaſion of infinite prodigies. Thy thoughts, therefore, muſt be noble, ſince they enable thee to overcome that groundleſs fear, which is the chief weakneſs of human nature. But how doſt thou know the genius I poſſeſſed, and to which thou giveſt ſuch kind commendations, that even now, as I liſten to thee, I feel a flattering pleaſure in them? Why doſt thou prefer me to all, who eſteemed myſelf inferior to many?" And I, more encouraged by thoſe obliging queſtions, anſwered reſpectfully:—"To ſo great a mind as thine, the pleaſing virtue of modeſty could not be wanting; and accordingly we find continual proofs of it in thy golden volumes. Hence, when thou diſcuſſeſt a philoſophical queſtion, in proportion as thou art ſplendid in thy eloquence, and profound in thy learning, ſo art thou modeſt in thy deciſions, leaving it to the readers to judge for themſelves. And this unwillingneſs to affirm, appears to me to have been uſual with many of you illuſ-

trious Ancients, beginning with Socrates, who was wont to confound the pride of vain learning by perpetual interrogations. Rare in the world at present is this virtue; for many, with impetuous eloquence, pour forth opinions, astonishing only for their audacity." Cicero, hearing this, angrily exclaimed—"Contemptible is all your knowledge, as it were a spark almost extinguished, in comparison of the ocean of splendour in which the eternal Intelligence expands itself! He who, among you, fills the world with astonishment at his learning; he who, to you, seems to exalt himself to the heavens, by the incredible sublimity of his genius, is by us Spirits freed from the slavery of the body, looked upon in as contemptible a light as the most senseless of animals is by you; and we, thus pure from perishable matter, are vile and abject intelligences, in comparison of the Supreme Cause. It is then a pride worthy of pity, if any one among you confides in his vain knowledge." Here he ceased,

leaving me to purſue the diſcourſe I had begun.

But, in order to ſhow him more clearly how well I was acquainted with his different ſtudies, I began to repeat ſome of the Exordia of his Philoſophical Works, and ſome of the perorations of his harangues; and afterwards, as they occurred to my recollection, various paſſages and ſentences of his different works. It is no leſs true than aſtoniſhing, that I beheld the Spectre at firſt ſhow ſigns of extraordinary agitation as he liſtened to me, and afterwards let fall the tears from his eye-lids upon his toga. Moved to compaſſion by them, I ceaſed repeating his ſentences, fearing that he was grieved at hearing them disfigured by a barbarous pronunciation. But he added, "While I was among you, I acquired no common reputation for eloquence, and employed in the ſtudy of it all the talents which nature had beſtowed upon me. At my voice, I have often ſeen the people aſſembled in the Forum, agi-

tated as the wayes beneath the wind; I have ſeen the tears flow from the eyes of ſevere judges, the wretched countenances of the accuſed brighten with joy, and thoſe of calumniators clouded with ſorrow; the inſolent abaſhed, and the haughty contemnors of juſtice trembling with fear. But thou beholdeſt in me a more aſtoniſhing effect of thy ſimple language, ſince thou reduceſt me again to human weakneſs. See how thy words fill me with pleaſing agitation, not uſual in this abyſs of death. Thou certainly couldſt not let me hear any ſound more agreeable, than that of my own ſentences, in this place, after the lapſe of ages, and with ſuch exact recollection." Then, to produce ſtill further in him that grateful effect, I went on to relate the circumſtances of his death, as they are tranſmitted to us by fame, and which no one even now liſtens to without grief. But, on hearing them, the Spectre became agitated, and fixed his eyes upon me. I immediately checked my diſcourſe, and he

ſighing

ſighing began:—"However kind thy intention, thou bringeſt me moſt bitter intelligence; I never had any knowledge of theſe outrages, which, though they only injured my wretched remains, were yet the effects of a rage ſo deteſtable, that the remembrance agitates me. Long paſt is the injury; anger is uſeleſs, and vengeance too late; yet I feel nevertheleſs, for the members I had in life, a renewal of human anxiety." I remained ſilent with aſtoniſhment at hearing theſe melancholy expreſſions, and then added: "An unexpected circumſtance is this that thou relateſt to me! Thou ſeeſt how I, who am ſtill living, am excited by an ardent deſire of converſing with you; innumerable other men ſuffer the ſame anxiety, and are ſcarcely reſtrained from ſatisfying it, by the aweful terrors of death. Bringers of intelligence from our world deſcend to you daily, and I am at a loſs to conceive why you ſhould not be anxious to hear it, eſpecially as the opportunities are infinite,

as well as the reaſons that ſhould incite you to deſire it." He replied, "More different than thou thinkeſt, are the cuſtoms of eternal time, from thoſe of thy momentary exiſtence. No quality of ours is ſimilar or proportioned to thoſe of the earth. To you, time, ſpace, and motion, are the baſe and the rule of every ſcience: to us, they are repugnant qualities; for infinite time has no meaſure; no extenſion or change of place can be connected with a ſubſtance which is devoid of the one, and fills no part of the other. Conceive then, even in the midſt of ſuch obſcurity, that it is impoſſible for us to converſe on this ſubject. Yet deſcribing with human words the ſecrets of the ſecond life, know that we are immerſed in the gulph of time, in the immenſity of which, not one ſpirit, but whole generations, are no more than a leaf that, agitated by the wind, floats upon the ſurface of the water. And as, in the vaſt extent of your ſea, it would be almoſt impoſſible for a few ſhipwrecked perſons,

ſwimming about in it, to meet—think how much more it muſt be ſo, in this ſea, without bottom, without ſhores; into which, if thou launcheſt thy ideas, thy mind becomes confuſed, weary, and bewildered, and warns thee not vainly to overſtep the boundaries of human underſtanding." I liſtened with incredible anxiety to ſuch myſterious words; and though I was filled with reverence by them, yet the aſſembling of the Spectres, and Tullius addreſſing them, which I had myſelf ſeen a little before, appeared to me to contradict his aſſertion of the difficulty of meeting in the Intellectual Ocean. In a reſpectful manner, therefore, I explained to him my perplexity; and he kindly replied: "It is equally commendable to yield aſſent to an argument whoſe evidence is clear, and to withhold it from the contrary, both being marks of a ſincere mind. But I am ready to remove from thy breaſt theſe uneaſy doubts. We were diſperſed, and ſeparated by immenſe intervals in the ſea of time; nor had any of us

us ever yet met in this eternal ſilence, when we heard a ſound, as of a trumpet, which called us towards this part of the earth; and we following this guide, as mariners who obſerve the watch-tower in a ſtormy night, have flocked together here, and are ſtill flocking in innumerable multitudes. We immediately perceived that theſe were the tombs of thoſe who, by their aſtoniſhing actions, were the chief authors of the Roman grandeur: upon them their country always placed its hopes in adverſity, and its confidence in proſperity: the proudeſt nations trembled at the ſound of their name. Now that the illuſtrious bones are broken by the ſpade of the clown, an extraordinary tumult is excited among us, and we are brought together here, to a meeting which we had ceaſed to expect. In in the mean while I was diſcourſing to the firſt I met, whom I perceived to be vulgar ſpirits; and therefore, according to my cuſtom when in life, I declaimed to them in an authorative ſtyle as in the forum.

SECOND DIALOGUE.

Brutus and Cæſar diſpute concerning the aſſaſſination of the latter.

WHILE Cicero was thus kindly entertaining me with his inſtructive diſcourſe, the caverns reſounded in every part with various low voices, and there iſſued from out the earth, and from the winding paſſages and from the tombs, other Spectres rendered viſible by a certain innate ſplendour like the trembling light of the glow-worm. In their appearance they reſembled, in ſome reſpects, thoſe which had preceded them, and in others they were different; for ſome were habited in the flowing toga, ſome were in the ſhort ſagum, ſome were in armour, ſome in the ſtole of the matrons; ſo that I did not doubt but that theſe were the ſpirits of the moſt illuſtrious Romans. How intereſting were your countenances,

tenances, and what dignity in your persons! At their appearance, though filled with an insatiable desire of beholding them, yet awed by their majesty, drawing back a little, I said to Cicero, "Support my courage, for the human breast can hardly withstand the unexpected prodigy." He stretched out his protecting hand, and with a kind look, said, "Remain;" then turning towards the Shades, who were assembling, with a mild and noble dignity he waved his right hand to demand silence. The Shades immmediately obeying with surprising docility, remained in a crowd around Cicero; and I stood near him, with suspended breath. The Spectres looked upon each other with mutual anxiety; and Cicero, like the rest, contemplated the multitude, when suddenly he exclaimed, with a kind of groan, "O distinguished among us, and justly called the last of the Romans, is it not thou, Marcus Brutus?" The other, stretching out his arms, answered, "I am he, ever ready to destroy tyrants.

tyrants. The friendly Shades then mingled in vain embraces, endeavouring, in the same manner as on earth, to satisfy their ancient affection. But while these were enjoying so sweet a recollection of their friendship, an angry Shade hastily rushed from the crowd, and advancing towards them, indignantly exclaimed, "What makes you so joyful, when the fall of Cæsar was the ruin of our country, by depriving it of a kind moderator of its discords?" Brutus turned his disdainful eyes upon that Shade, and angrily said, "O vile Antony, thy words are still suitable to thy depraved manners. But after having been in life such a despiser of every virtue, now, at least, suffer our spirits, separated for ages, though united perpetually by affection, to console each other, without being exposed to thy troublesome importunities." While Brutus was still speaking, another Shade eagerly came forward, as if hastening to a most important contest. The multitude let him advance, as the vulgar give way at the

appearance

appearance of a perſon of diſtinction. The two Spectres who had begun to diſpute were ſilent, and looked at this one. It came forward in ſilence, and fixed upon them its angry eyes. But it was a ſilence that reſembled the threatening calm which precedes a deſtructive ſtorm. He then exclaimed, "Perfidious Brutus, with what ſounds of malicious joy doſt thou diſturb this abyſs of death? Although the torrent of ages muſt have overwhelmed the memory of thy crime, and of my pitiable death, yet thou burneſt with perpetual anger, as if it were ſtill the fatal Ides of March: my blood, which flowed from ſo many and ſuch cruel wounds, was then inſufficient to ſatiate thy thirſt after it? Yet inveterate hatred is uſed not only to be moderated by the death of the deteſted perſon, but even to be totally extinguiſhed, by compaſſion for the fate which is common to all." Thus ſaying, he regarded Brutus with a look of diſdain. The latter was ſilent; yet his ſilence ſhowed that his mind was immerſed

in lofty ideas; for, intrepid and ſevere, but without anger or contempt, with the magnanimity of a Stoic, he ſhewed that he was ſtill unconquered by Fortune. Antony then approached in a ſoothing manner this angry Shade, who grew calm, and appeared to recollect in him an old friend. I clearly perceived that the new Spectre was the Dictator Cæſar, as well from his diſcourſe, as from his portraits preſerved to us on coins, and in various buſts. I ſtood, in the mean while, eagerly liſtening to ſo diſtinguiſhed a conteſt, when Cicero interpoſing between Brutus and the Dictator, ſaid to the latter, in a conciliating voice, " Be appeaſed, O diſtinguiſhed ſpirit! ſince Brutus hated not thee, but thy tyranny. In life thou waſt accuſtomed to admire virtue even in thy enemies, to behold it with pleaſure, and kindly to commend it, even amidſt the horrors of civil diſcord. Thou art well acquainted with the ſtoical ſeverity of his manners, with the integrity of his life, with the

 innocence

innocence of his desires; and his arm was excited to strike, if thou wilt not permit me to say by sincere virtue, thou must at least suffer me to call it an illustrious image of her." The Dictator, already appeased, listened to these exhortations, and joyfully replied, "What is too difficult for thy triumphant eloquence, by which I was so astonishingly overcome in the accusation of Ligarius? The writings which contained manifest proofs of his guilt, fell from my hands, and I acquitted him, not convinced, but persuaded." "It was," added Cicero, "much more the effect of thy natural clemency, than of my eloquence." "It was the effect of both," answered Cæsar immediately, "if we would fairly reconcile our opinions; and we both received afterwards an unworthy return: I saw among my assassins this very Ligarius; think then what a man thou savedst by thy eloquence, and I by my clemency."

While

While they were thus converſing, Brutus, in a thoughtful attitude, remained ſilent. Then Cicero, turning towards him, held out his hand to him in a friendly manner, ſaying: "The enterpriſe was accompliſhed; and thou ſhouldſt be contented with having offered to thy Country ſo illuſtrious a victim. To preſerve here ancient hatred, when all juſt ground for it has been removed by time, would be a vain obſtinacy, rather than a generous conſtancy. I intreat thee, therefore, by that friendly influence which I had over thee when on earth, and by that participation of pure learning which ſoftened our civil cares, to ſhew thyſelf now magnanimous as thou waſt formerly. If, for powerful reaſons, thou piercedſt the already waſted body of the Dictator, ſhew thyſelf friendly to his exalted ſpirit, which was ſent by thy dagger into eternal exile." At theſe words, I ſaw the gloom of ſorrow diſappear from the countenance of Brutus. The Dictator, with his uſual propenſity to clemency, took

hold of that hand which had murdered him: his countenance ſhewed, that the pleaſure of ſeeing again ſo many magnanimous a citizen, extinguiſhed in him all deſire of revenge: and theſe Spirits being being free from all human emotions, Brutus, with a ſerene countenance, though rather pale and thin, as it was in life, thus anſwered: "O Cæſar, I plungéd my ſword into thy breaſt, not from hatred to thee, but from compaſſion for Rome. Now, after twenty ages, when all opportunity for human enterpriſes is deſtroyed with our body, we may here paſs a magnanimous and impartial judgment on them. Tell me now, if it does not appear to thee, that thy moſt fortunate days were fatal to the Republic?" Then Cicero exclaimed—"O great and liberal conteſt! ſuitable only to two ſuch minds." But Antony wiſhed to oppoſe Brutus, on account of the regard he had for Cæſar when alive. Cæſar, however, made a ſign to him to be ſilent; and turning to Brutus, aſked him—"After that I

was

was proſtrated by thy dagger, did liberty riſe again?" "No," anſwered he, with a ſigh; "it fell a prey to this Antony whom thou ſeeſt here; and to Octavius thy nephew, who renewed the proſcriptions of Sylla, and beheaded the moſt valuable citizens." Then Cæſar added—"And what, O Brutus! became of thee? What reward did thy Country beſtow on thee, for this atrocity, which thou pretendeſt was for her benefit?" He anſwered—"The recompence of virtue is the praiſe of the wiſe, and immortal fame: and, if the malice of of fortune deprives us of ſuch rewards, the moſt valuable and moſt ſecure always remains, the ſatisfaction of an honourable and noble deſign." "But what," inſiſted Cæſar, "was thy end?" And Brutus mournfully replied: "I alſo, oppreſſed by the fate of Rome, turned upon myſelf that ſword which was become uſeleſs to her. I fell, but together with my Country, and endured not the ſhame of ſeeing her in ſlavery." "Already it appears then," returned the

Dictator, "that thy enterprise was useless in its consequences; let us now see if it was just in its causes: relate what they were. And Brutus began:—" An astonishing genius, but incapable of tranquillity; a great heart, but immoderate in its desires; a generous disposition, but disdaining all civil equality; a soul always excited, as it were by a feverish impulse, to extraordinary enterprises, were in thee dangerous recommendations, and splendid vices. Hence there never was a citizen more pernicious than thou, in a State whose liberty was already infirm. No virtue ever restrained thee from attempting to raise thyself to fortune; and when thou hadst attained it, thou sparedst those who remained alive, after the dreadful slaughter, with the parade of clemency. Nor will I confine my discourse to these general assertions, but, in the proof of their truth, descend to particulars; for which purpose, passing over the scandalous licentiousness of thy private character, I mean to lay open

open thy public vices. Now recollect, that when thou wast of unripe years, but mature wickedness, thou couldst not depart to the proconsulship of Spain on a disgraceful account; for, having spent thy whole fortune in the Comitii, in order to obtain it, thou wast seized by thy creditors, and couldst not have gone to take possession of that dignity, if our rich Crassus had not been thy security. When, by new prodigalities, thou hadst obtained the consulship, thou wast more seditious than a tribune of the people, by flattering whom thou artfully preparedst thyself a way to rise amid the civil commotions to exalted fortune. The Senate was afflicted to see thee propose afresh, that ever-fatal incitement to popular tumult, the Agrarian law: the more respectable citizens trembled; and the best of all, the excellent Cato; thy colleague Bibulus opposed thy pernicious attempts. But thou appealedst to the people. O deplorable Comitii! through which thy satellites were dispersed

diſperſed with daggers under their robes, to the terror of all good citizens! Scarcely had Bibulus begun to harangue from the roſtrum, againſt the law thou hadſt propoſed, when the mob, incited by thee, threw dirt upon the venerable head of the Conſul, broke the faſces of his Lictors, dragged him along the ſteps of the temple of Caſtor; covered with blood and wounds thoſe who attended him, and among them two tribunes of the people, though their perſons were ſeized. Twice did the magnanimous Cato raiſe his voice, till then held in veneration, againſt that furious tempeſt; and twice did thy aſſaſſins violently drag him from the roſtrum. In this infamous manner didſt thou, laying aſide all ſhame, openly diſturb the Republic. Hence thy oppreſſed colleague, in danger of his life, was forced to confine himſelf to his own houſe, during a great part of his conſulſhip, leaving to thy mercy, liberty expiring in thy arms. Afterwards, when having obtained the Province of Gaul, thou

waſt

waſt abſent from us for ten years, thou preparedſt to be ſo much more formidable when preſent; for theſe wars were to thee a glorious *gymnaſium*, in which thou exerciſedſt thyſelf, to conquer the Romans afterwards. Recollect the inauſpicious day in which thou paſſedſt the Rubicon, and entered thy country, ſilent and trembling at the ſplendour of thy arms. Lamentable triumphs, unfortunate diſcipline of thy legions, who brought to Rome deceitful glory, and real ſlavery! From that time depriving us of our liberty, thou ſhameleſsly and daily declaredſt that the name of Republic was vain, that Sylla had acted imprudently in laying down the Dictatorſhip, and that for the future the Romans muſt reſpect thy commands as laws. And behold with trembling hearts, and countenances of feigned joy, the greater part flock around the new tyrant, and, in lamentable ſtrife, endeavour to ſurpaſs each other in baſeneſs. Afterwards there began to be ſcattered among the people inſidious reports,

reports, which called thee King; thy statues were seen crowned with the royal diadem; and this Anthony, then Consul, in the festival of the Lupercalia, came dancing naked, in that ridiculous ceremony, where thou wast seated on a throne of gold, and offered thee the crown. He prostrated himself as a suppliant at thy feet, begging thee to accept it; and thou in return, feigning, with all the art of a tragedian, to refuse it, left it doubtful, whether the one was more skilled in flattery, or the other in dissimulation. But the murmurs of the multitude, and their foreboding silence at this disgraceful scene, clearly proved that the populace were not yet so depraved by thee, as to have forgotten their ancient hatred of monarchy. But as if our sagacity, as being men oppressed by fortune, were insufficient to penetrate the heart of a tyrant, thou wast thyself solicitous to lay it fully open to us. Lucius Cotta therefore, the keeper of the Sibylline Books, spread a report, that, according to those oracles, the Parthians could

could not be conquered but by a King, and that it would be proper to give thee that title, that we might be enabled to ſubdue them. At length ſervile cowardice arrived to ſo aſtoniſhing an exceſs, that ſomebody propoſed in the ſenate, to decree thee an unreſtrained licentiouſneſs in the common ſlavery, ſo that thou mighteſt uſe any woman according to thy pleaſure. Now if theſe were not proofs of tyranny, what others were we to wait for, but to ſee our lives, and thoſe of our children, and the purity of our wives and daughters, a daily preſent of thy clemency? What more? Behold Pharſalia covered with the bodies of murdered Romans beheaded by traitors! Pompey the good in exile, the country in mourning! Mountains of dry bones are the baſe of thy throne; thy robe is dyed, not with purple, but with Roman blood. In the mean time, infamous flattery calls thee Julian Jove, and invincible God; temples, altars, ſtatues are erected; prieſts offer libations, incenſe, ſacrifices, to that divinity of thine, which I annihilated with a dagger.

THIRD DIALOGUE.

Cæſar alledges the corruption of the Republic, and maintains the neceſſity for Monarchy.

BRUTUS ceaſed; and Cæſar, turning towards the multitude, began. "If I, Julius Cæſar, by my liberality, by my triumphs, by the greatneſs of my mind, ever acquired any favour in your ſight, I entreat you in death, as the only reward for it, to give me a favourable hearing. If I were guilty, the ſword of my opponent and of his followers appeaſed your anger by a terrible revenge; but let that liberty be granted me, which is permitted even to malefactors, fairly to defend my own cauſe."

He then turned himſelf towards Brutus, and proceeded as follows: "Since thou haſt explained the reaſons which led thee to remove me from Rome, as a fatal obſtacle

to her welfare, thou muſt permit me to declare thoſe by which I was induced to exalt myſelf above the equality of a citizen; of which be it the firſt, and as it were the root of all the reſt, that Rome was arrived to ſuch a ſtate, that in thoſe times, whoever was diſtinguiſhed for any pre-eminence of virtue, was under an abſolute neceſſity of chooſing one of theſe two alternatives, empire or ſlavery. The multitude could not entertain a more wholeſome wiſh than to ſhelter themſelves from the outrages of triumphant licentiouſneſs, under the government of a ſupreme Moderator. Abuſes, not of recent introduction, not few in number, but infinite, inveterate, incurable, deſtructive, had cauſed true liberty to be not only infirm, but expiring, nay extinguiſhed, long before we came into the world.

"And that the truth of theſe general aſſertions may appear evident, recollect that, almoſt a century before I fell by thy

hands, the audacity of Curiatius, Tribune of the People, had arrived to ſuch a pitch, that he threatened to impriſon the two Conſuls, Scipio Naſica, and D. Junius Brutus; which threat, the blind fury of the people, already inflamed by unbridled licentiouſneſs, was on the point of putting into execution. Scarcely had one luſtrum elapſed after ſo unfortunate a Conſulſhip, when there aroſe, I will not ſay the diſſentions, but the civil wars, in the tribuneſhip of the Gracchi. If their violent deaths were not an irrefragable proof of extreme and irremediable depravation, there came immediately after to Rome a Barbarian King, to manifeſt it to the univerſe. I ſpeak of Jugurtha, who had uſurped the throne of Numidia, after treacherouſly aſſaſſinating his brothers. Our Conſuls, Scaurus and Calpurnius, ſent to revenge their deaths, returned, ſubdued by his treaſures. Being afterwards ſummoned here to defend himſelf, before a Senate which he had already corrupted with his uſurped riches,

riches, he came immediately and presented himself, with a bold and undisturbed countenance, before his judges, with whose baseness he was well acquainted.—While the accusation for these murders was yet before the Senate, he committed another, openly in this city, on the person of Massiva, another of his brothers, who had vainly sought here protection from his perfidious dagger. Nor for this, and other innumerable crimes, did the Senate decree any punishment further than commanding him to depart: at which connivance, the guilty Monarch himself was so much surprised, that, on his departure, he turned round to these walls, and uttered that scornful and merited reproach, '*O venal City, soon wilt thou perish if thou meetest a purchaser.*'

"If there remained any citizen exempt from the universal corruption, he was the butt of universal insult; so that Q. Metellus Numidius, then Censor, whose breast was still warmed by ancient virtue, was so

 hated,

hated, that the Tribune Caius Afinius feized him in the ftreet at noon-day, and dragged him to the Tarpeian Rock, whence he would have thrown him, if fome perfon who came up had not prevented him from executing his defign. But the Cenfor was, notwithftanding, fo ill-treated in that tumult, that the blood gufhed out of his ears; and fo hateful was his virtue, that the Tribune Saturninus, the moft infolent of all men who ever did or ever will exift, not being able to endure his prefence, began to infult him with open outrages. The Forum was no longer influenced by eloquence or dignity, but by ftones, dirt, and blows. In that affembly of peace and free debate, the ferocious Tribune, at the head of the mad populace, attacked Metellus, who fled to the Capitol; but he purfued him even thither, refolved to flay him upon that fpot, which a little before had been witnefs of his triumph. Nor was it till torrents of Roman blood flowed down the hill, that the Patricians fucceeded in faving from the

fury of the multitude that moſt valuable life, which being nevertheleſs expoſed to daily outrages, Metellus preſerved it for better times, by retiring to Rhodes.

« Then Saturninus, exulting in the intoxication of his bloody enterpriſes, when his tribuneſhip was ended, aſpired to it again; but when he ſaw that the ſuffrages were unfavourable to him, ſupported by his deſperate followers, he carried his violence in the Comitii to the moſt aſtoniſhing lengths. There, in your ſight, O ye ſubmiſſive Romans, he killed Aulus Nonius, the laſt of the ten Tribunes then choſen, and proclaimed himſelf in his ſtead. Were ye not deſerving of theſe outrages? Saturninus not only kept poſſeſſion of that office, but behaved in it with a degree of mad fury ſuitable to the infamous manner in which he had obtained it. What then was ſafe in Rome, except iniquity? what dignity was reſpected, what law unviolated, what virtue not deſpiſed! Alas! why do I relate

I relate ſuch odious events, even now to be lamented, though buried in the abyſs of time?

"But the ſight of this multitude of anceſtors, contemporaries, and deſcendants, aſſembled together after ſo many ages, brings back the ſolicitudes of mortal life. Some of you are able to bear witneſs of the unheard-of inſult offered by Saturninus to Glaucias the Prætor. While he was ſitting in the Comitii, the Tribune complaining that his preſence was diſagreeable to him, drove him away, and broke his curule chair. But what occaſion for aſtoniſhment? Did not the ſhameleſs ferocity of that Tribune go ſo far as to murder by the hands of his ſatellites in the preſence of the people, and the Senate, Memmius, when on the point of obtaining the conſulſhip by a majority of ſuffrages? You, however, till then cold witneſſes of ſo many horrors, in that day could no longer endure them. As if ſuddenly

awakened

awakened from a lethargy, you flew Saturninus with popular fury; he was torn in pieces, and his head carried in triumph through the city, contemned in death, as much as he had been insolent in life. Thus slaughter was punished by slaughter, crimes were corrected by crimes; and the remedies applied, added strength to the disease. Then these skies become less gloomy, since they were no longer obscured by the villainy of that tribune, there re-appeared, like a ray of the sun amidst the stormy clouds, the illustrious Metellus, in the very year that I was born. And now behold me myself, in the beginning of my life, a spectator of civil commotions. On one side, the Tribune Drusus encouraged the licentiousness of the populace, and on the other, the Senator Cæpio supported the tyranny of the Nobles; which contest, however serious and destructive, arose notwithstanding, from a childish cause. Many here present remember, that these two men were in their youth so united in disgraceful friendship,

friendſhip, that they exchanged wives. But afterwards, at the ſale of ſome furniture, a competition aroſe between them for a ring, which each of them wiſhed to have; and from that occaſion, ſuch a hatred grew up between them, that burſting forth in the Comitii, it hurried to deſtruction the wretched City, in the ruinous fury of their conteſt; in the violence of which, the Tribune even threatened to throw his opponent from the Tarpeian Rock, no longer the enviable goal of triumphant Generals, but the puniſhment of thoſe who oppoſed the exceſſes of the people. But if this was only a threat to an illuſtrious Senator, Philippus, then Conſul, felt the effects of the inſolence of Druſus; for his authority being troubleſome to him, he dragged him to priſon, ſo abuſed by the fury of the mob, that the blood guſhed from his noſtrils; at the ſight of which, Druſus, with a ferocious ſmile, made this bitter remark, '*It is not blood, but the juice of thruſhes,*' as deriding the Conſul for his intemperance in eating.

There

There remained no check to violence, except violence. Before his office was expired however, Druſus was ſecretly aſſaſſinated one night, by ſome perſons who were never diſcovered. Thoſe melancholy quarrels were, perhaps, buried in his grave? No! almoſt immediately the diſputes which had ſo many times convulſed the State, concerning the money lent by the Patricians to the Plebeians, broke out afreſh. Affairs of this nature appertained to the Prætor. A. Sempronius Aſellius, who at that time held that office, endeavoured to oppoſe the avidity of the creditors, who oppreſſed the people with uſury; and to prove that juſtice was an empty name, the Prætor was attacked by the Patricians, while he was ſacrificing, a ſtone daſhed the conſecrated cup from his hands, and he ſtrove to fly for ſhelter to the neighbouring Temple of Veſta; but his purſuers intercepted the way, and forced him to take refuge in a tavern, where he was ſlain. In vain did the Senate, by its autho-

rity,

rity, and by promifes of reward, invite every one to difcover the authors of this atrocity, who remained concealed, notwithftanding they had committed it in the midft of your Affembly. Nothing was fuccefsful in Rome, except wickednefs."

And lo, in my imagination, I fee opened a vaft and immenfe volume, written with Roman blood. I read in it the actions of two men, filled with an infatiable thirft after it, the actions of Marius and Sylla. At thefe names the earth refounded with lamentations, every countenance was clouded with grief, every attitude was expreffive of horror. Cæfar remained for fome time filent, as a pilot who, from the ftern, obferves with intrepidity the raging billows; and then exclaimed—"Ah tardy and ufelefs complaints! If the bare names of thefe two executioners make your blood run cold, why did you fuffer their cruelties?" He ceafed; and, during that awful paufe, the multitude grew calm. Then purfuing

pursuing his discourse, he added, "Sylla was Consul at the vigorous age of ten Lustra, the year after the murder of Asellius. He solicited the command of the army against Mithridates, the most glorious and formidable enemy of the Romans. Marius, already rendered illustrious by his triumphs over the Numidians, the Cimbri, and the Teutones, and by six Consulships, arrived at his seventieth year, heavy in body, and infirm in constitution, stimulated by a feverish ambition, was desirous of dragging out the last years of his life in Cappadocia and Pontus, and disputed with Sylla the appointment to that command: a strife magnanimous in its conception, but dreadful in its consequences! For Marius, in order to obtain your suffrages, gained over to his side the Tribune P. Sulpicius, a man insatiably eager after wealth and blood. In his vices he certainly surpassed every one; but for which he was himself most remarkable, was matter of doubt. The freedom of Rome, conferred by our

anceſtors as the reward of faithful allies, was publicly ſold by this Tribune. Thus he filled the Comitii with infamous men, who had obtained the rights of citizens, not by ſerving the country, but by diſgracing it; and that the incredible audacity of his attempts might be manifeſt, he had conſtantly in his pay three thouſand armed ſatellites, and never appeared in the Comitii, but with a guard of ſix hundred young men of the Equeſtrian Order, whom he named his Anti-Senate; who, proud of this title, aſpired to deſerve it by their ſeditious and tyrannical proceedings.

"The Senate, however, having given to Sylla the command againſt Mithridates, the Tribune excited his vile aſſaſſins to ſupport the intereſts of Marius. Behold the ſwords glitter and ſtream with blood; the Conſuls fly, and many are ſlain in the Comitii. Sylla retires to his army in Campania: Marius is declared Commander of it, in the Forum, by the raving populace, whoſe

whose feet are bathed in the yet warm blood with which it is overflowed. But Sylla, whose actions were never tempered by compassion, a feeling to him impossible, and abhorrent from his nature, brought his legions, destined to new triumphs in Asia, to be the instruments of a cruel vengeance against his Country. His entrance into these walls was like that of a hungry tiger: the streets and the houses resounded with cries and lamentations, with the clash of arms, and the groans of the dying. Sylla himself, waving a torch in his hand, called upon his soldiers to burn the City without commiseration. You, equally terrified and desperate, from the tops of your smoking houses, threw the ruins upon the ferocious soldiers of Sylla, who, still more enraged at that defence, added fresh fuel to the flames. It was not a tumult, but a regular and cruel war. Your eagle, as a sign of death and slavery to yourselves, was set up in Rome, by one of her own citizens. O day, deplorable and impious,

which gave a mortal blow to all hopes of real liberty! Marius, who had often ſaved Rome and Italy from the Barbarians, was then conſtrained to fly from theſe walls. If infamous ſlaughter can be called by the name of victory, Sylla remained conqueror, and, immediately joining his army in Campania, paſſed into Greece againſt Mithridates. Nor did the Country obtain any reſpite, by the abſence of theſe ferocious competitors; for the commotions were continued, even by the two Conſuls, Cneius Octavius, and Cinna. The latter, although he had ſworn in the Capitol fidelity to Cinna, having afterwards received three hundred talents from the ſupporters of Marius, put arms into the hands of the ſlaves and of the populace, and propoſed that he ſhould be recalled: his colleague oppoſed him. You ſaw war carried on in the Forum deluged with your blood, and covered with thouſands of your dead bodies. Cinna, being defeated, left Rome, traverſed Italy, and collected followers. Marius himſelf joined him,

him, and both together, inflamed with atrocious revenge, returned to these walls, their swords yet reeking with civil blood. The defence of Rome was then confided to Pompeius Strabo; but the Heavens, as if abhorring that impious spectacle, where, near the walls of their country, fathers slew their sons, brothers their brothers, became darkened by a sudden storm, and a thunderbolt destroyed your defender. In the midst of such calamities, the people, become still more barbarous, took the body, scorched by the lightning, from the bier on which it was carrying to the funeral pile, and dragged it through the streets. O Romans! this was the father of that Pompey, by you justly called the Great, whose illustrious qualities I admired, though we contended for that indivisible prize, the Empire!

"Fortune, however, soon reduced the Senate to the necessity of asking, not peace, but pity, of the two cruel aggressors.

Cinna entered firſt, preceded by his Lictors: Marius ſtopped at the gate, and, with a bitter ſmile, ſaid that he could not enter, till the Aſſembly of the people paſſed a decree to recall him from the exile to which they had condemned him. While the ſuffrages were collecting with eager anxiety, Marius led on his ſquadrons to dreadful enterpriſes, ſhut all the gates of the City, and diſperſed throughout every part of it his aſſaſſins, moſt of them ſlaves, whom he had ſelected for the maſſacres of that bloody day. You ſaw the ſtreets covered with the ſlain, their limbs ſported with by the populace, the infants daſhed againſt the walls, the matrons fainting in the ſtreets, the virgins violated. Not with ſuch rage does the famiſhed wolf, when he breaks into the fold, tear the innocent lambs, as the cruel Marius exterminated the citizens. The roſtrum was ſpeedily covered with the heads of the moſt illuſtrious Patricians. You Romans, a little while before, I know not whether free, or inſolent, then inſen-

ſible

ſible to extreme outrages, trembling at the ſight of incredible ſlaughter, tamely ſubmitted your throats to the daggers of the aſſaſſins who pierced them with a ſmile. If, in the midſt of ſo much cowardice, the Conſul Cneius Octavius, in his curule chair, dreſſed in his toga, and ſurrounded by his Lictors, intrepidly waited the event, this was certainly no real proof of courage; for although, when attacked by the aſſaſſins, he remained in that dignified poſture, and thus was ſlain by them, there was afterwards found upon him the anſwer of an aſtrologer, which promiſed he ſhould not periſh in thoſe diſturbances.

"Which crimes ſhall I mention, or which paſs over, of thoſe that in ſuch abundance offer themſelves to my recollection? The Senator Sextus Licinius was thrown, by the order of Marius, from the Tarpeian Rock. The ſon of Marius ſlew with his own hand a tribune of the people, and ſent his head to his father as a moſt acceptable

 preſent.

present. Two brothers of my family, Lucius and Caius Cæsar, fell in those dreadful scenes. Caius having taken refuge with one of his clients, whose life he had saved by his eloquence, was by him ungratefully denounced to the satellites of Marius. Lucius was killed at the tomb of the Tribune Varius, who had been the enemy of the good when living, and, when dead, had this victim offered him, suitably to his ferocious disposition. P. Crassus saw one of his sons slain; and being unable to endure the anguish he felt from his loss, killed himself upon his body. In the immense lapse of time, are hidden infinite crimes then committed. There is, however, one which you must yet deplore—the death of the orator Marcus Antonius. Nor let any one imagine that Marius condemned him for any other reason, than the innate hatred of the wicked towards the good. This inhuman wretch was at table, when he was informed that M. Antony was taken by his assassins. Intoxicated with wine and blood, he shouted with

with joy, clapped his hands, and ſtamped with his feet, in the exultation of ferocious ſatisfaction. His gueſts with difficulty prevented him from going himſelf to kill him. He ordered Anius, one of his military tribunes, to bring him immediately that venerable head. He, being arrived at the houſe of Antony, ſent in his ſatellites to execute the murder, while he remained at the door. The ſight of ſo great a man, and his powerful eloquence, ſuſpended the ſwords of thoſe aſſaſſins. The Tribune, incenſed at this ſhort delay, went into the houſe, and with his own hand cut off the head of the orator, while the others ſtood liſtening with tears in their eyes, overcome by the compaſſion raiſed in them by his perſuaſive words. He then carried the head to Marius, who received the murderer with extravagant embraces, and placed the bloody offering among the viands on the table, at which he ſtill ſat debauching. Long did he feaſt his cruel eyes with the ſight of that head, which, with innumerable others, was afterwards fixed

upon

upon the Roſtrum, an object of horror in that very place where it had ſo often been regarded with admiration.

"No merit, no dignity, could check the blind impetuoſity of anger in Marius, who, breathing vengeance, continued with unremitting rage to deluge with blood this City, whence he had a little before been driven by the chance of war. Even Catulus himſelf, formerly his colleague, and who had particularly contributed to the victory over the Cimbri, could not then obtain from him any favour. But, as if the ſplendour of his glory were hateful to him, neither preſent entreaties, nor paſt merit, nor their common laurels, could bend the ſtern ſoul of Marius, who always gave that terrible anſwer, "*Let him die.*" Wherefore Catulus, driven to deſpair, cauſed a quantity of combuſtible matter to be lighted in a confined cellar, and was ſuffocated in the flames. Merula alſo, the prieſt of Jupiter, anticipated the death deſigned for him,

among

among ſo many maſſacres, by ſtabbing himſelf before the ſtatue of that Divinity. So numerous, however, were thoſe marked out for ſlaughter in that atrocious ſoul, that Marius himſelf had not time to pronounce ſentence upon all of them: wherefore he agreed with his executioners, on an expeditious method of murdering the citizens at his feet, in the ſtreets. It was this:—every one whoſe ſalutation he did not return, was immediately to be ſlain. Many came to ſupplicate for themſelves or for their relations, life appearing to every one a favour in the midſt of ſuch deſtruction; and many were ſlain at the feet of the hoary tyrant, who condemned them by a fatal ſilence. Even his friends (if the wicked have any) never approached him in thoſe bloody ſcenes, but with the paleneſs of death upon their countenances. Full five days and five nights did that monſter ruin, burn, and deluge with blood, this earth, which ought to have opened to ſwallow him up. Nor was his immenſe vengeance confined to theſe walls; but

but all Italy was ſtained with blood; in the midſt of which, he revelled in ſplendid entertainments, delighted to ſee it flow in ſmoking torrents. In a ſhort time, however, his own intemperance executed that vengeance which was more juſtly due to your ſwords. Marius died of debauchery and old-age, who ought rather to have periſhed with famine and in his cradle. It is difficult to decide whether he were more fatal to our enemies or to ourſelves.

"Rome, however, was not delivered by his death from the dreadful weight of that tyranny. Even during the celebration of his funeral rites, Fimbria, the moſt ferocious of his ſatellites, inflamed by ſudden rage, ordered his aſſaſſins to kill Scævola, the Pontifex Maximus, who was performing the ceremony; and when he ſaved himſelf by flight, he had the incredible audacity to cite that wiſe, reſpectable, and ſacred perſon before the Comitii, as a criminal; where Fimbria being requeſted to bring forward

his

his accufation, faid it was this, namely, that Scævola had not received the blows that were intended for him. The name as well as the cruelty of Marius, remained as a fatal inheritance to his fon; who, being made Conful four years after the death of his father, was eager to cut off the few good who remained, like fcattered ears forgotten in the harveft. But not being able to furpafs his father in cruelty, he wifhed to diftinguifh himfelf by his treachery. Having therefore called the Senate together, while the Senators were fitting in the hall, they were the greater part flain by the Marian executioners, long accuftomed to daily affaffinations; in which maffacre Scævola was at laft included, who was killed in the veftibule of the Temple of Vefta.

"While Rome was contaminated by thefe cruelties, Sylla was fighting in Afia, againft Mithridates; but foon turning his legions againft us, he commenced a career of horrible deftruction:

destruction: and as a first beginning, while he was presiding in the Senate, in the Temple of Bellona, he caused to be massacred, as they were confined in a place close by, full six thousand of the soldiers of Marius, who had surrendered themselves prisoners to him. The agonizing cries of that multitude slaughtered by the assassins, stopped all power of utterance in the heaving breast of every senator: a death-like silence overcast that venerable Assembly; the horror painted in their countenances, and their wavering eyes, were eloquently expressive of their terrified minds. But Sylla, as if he were performing some peaceful duty, uttered these words, astonishing for their ferocious indifference: *Mind what you are about; it is only a few rebels, whom I have ordered to be chastised.* After which massacre, you saw the blood flow through all the streets, and the instruments of Sylla's cruelty, insatiably thirsting after it, spread themselves in every part. In such an uncertainty of life, the invention of

of profcription appeared merciful; for the fatal Table, in which fo many illuftrious lives were fold at two talents each, left fome hope of fafety to thofe who were not comprehended in it. The firft infcribed upon that lift of death, were the two Confuls of that year, for ever execrable, and then the moft diftinguifhed Patricians and Senators, to the number of near five thoufand: and that the memory of fuch deftruction might not be loft, Sylla, with ftupendous boldnefs, had the names of thofe wretches inferted in the public records. Thus, by a dreadful convulfion of moral feelings, contrary qualities, as virtue and vice, were no longer diftinguifhed, but were confufedly mixed and confounded together. If a father, a brother, a fon, afforded refuge to his profcribed fon, brother, or father, he was condemned to perifh along with him: if relations killed their profcribed relations, they obtained praife and reward, as happened to Catiline, who began his fatal career with fratricide.

Neither the Temples, nor the houfehold gods, nor the paternal manfion, nor the nuptial bed, could afford an afylum from the treachery that was diffufed throughout all Italy. Hufbands were ftabbed in the trembling embraces of their wives, fons in the palpitating bofoms of their mothers. Nor were men only, but even women, profcribed; Sylla, in fine, condemning that defencelefs fex, who rivalled not his power, whom even the barbarians hold facred, and who are wont to extinguifh, rather than inflame, the cruel paffions in every human breaft.

FOURTH DIALOGUE.

The Spectre of Gratidianus.

THE Dictator was thus ſpeaking, when a Shade appeared, whoſe head trembled as if it had been cut off and replaced on the body; the mark of the axe was viſible on his neck, in a ſtripe of blood: he was without eyes, and without hands; and when he was near the Dictator, he ſtretched out towards him his bloody ſtumps, as demanding compaſſion or revenge, while ſanguine tears diſtilled from the hollows of his extinguiſhed eyes. O ſight of horror! Cæſar ſuſpended his diſcourſe, and appeared grieved at his appearance; and the Shade concealed itſelf among the crowd, as aſhamed to be ſeen in that mangled ſtate. Then the Dictator proceeded: "Behold a dreadful action of Catiline, and of which none but a fratricide could be capable. That is Gratidianus, an illuſtrious Patri-

cian, proſcribed for being the nephew of Marius. Catiline invented and directed the manner of his puniſhment. Having been firſt ſcourged through the ſtreets by the executioner, his eyes were then put out, his tongue and his hands cut off, all his limbs broken, and finally he was beheaded. But it was at leaſt permitted to compaſſionate ſo cruel a ſpectacle? No! a ſenator who fainted at the ſight, was inſtantly ſlain by the aſſaſſins. Catiline himſelf was eager to preſent the head to Sylla, and then waſhed his hands, reeking with blood, in the ſacred fountain of the Temple of Apollo, as if he had been performing ſome religious ceremony.

"In the mean time, the heads of the proſcribed were brought, from every part of Italy, to the houſe of Sylla, which was filled with daily executions, and the aſſaſſins received their reward, as at a public treaſury, for the encouragement of atrocity. Hither alſo were the proſcribed often brought

brought alive, and then put to death with the moſt dreadful tortures. Nor do I think that there remained, in thoſe fatal times, any one worthy the name of a Roman Citizen, except a boy of fourteen years of age, our venerable Cato; who, being frequently taken to the houſe of Sylla, by his uncle, on account of the intimacy that ſubſiſted between their families, when he viewed thoſe threſholds ſtained with blood, was ſtruck with a generous anger. He could not believe that Rome could endure ſuch abominable maſſacrès, and lamented that he had not a ſword to kill the execrable tyrant: and to ſuch a degree was the youth inflamed by that ſublime anger, that his uncle could ſcarcely reſtrain him from openly manifeſting thoſe magnanimous and dangerous thoughts. I myſelf, who now addreſs you, was included in the number of the proſcribed, for no other crime than being related to the family of Marius. I was then in the eighteenth year of my age, and was forced to fly and wander about, to

avoid the fury of my perſecutors; but many perſons continually ſupplicating the tyrant in my favour, overcome at length by wearineſs at their importunities, rather than by compaſſion, he eraſed me from the liſt; but ſo foreign to his nature was clemency, that he uſed daily to lament his having pardoned me.

"What eloquence is capable of comprehending thoſe cruelties? Thoſe which remain untold, are always greater than thoſe that have been related: ſooner ſhall time and ſpeech fail, than materials for the dreadful ſubject, which ſpreads like an immenſe ocean. Entire cities were proſcribed, and their deſerted ſtreets filled only with dead bodies. Præneſte was deſolated by the deſtruction of twelve thouſand proſcribed; and afterwards Spoletum, Interamnæ, Florence, Sulmona, Bovianum, Iſernia, Teleſium, to paſs over many others, were deluged with blood, burnt and deſtroyed. After which impious enterpriſes,

terprifes, he affumed the title of Dictator; and by your cowardice was given him that unheard-of power, that whatever he did fhould be confidered as legal: of which immediately availing himfelf, he appeared in the Forum with twenty-four Lictors, with the axes and fafces, for the firft time there had ever been feen there fo formidable an apparatus of death. Then, by a cruel mockery, he difplayed and proved at the fame time, his own pride, and your pufillanimity, inviting the people to choofe new Confuls: for Lucretius Offella, a moft diftinguifhed Patrician, having offered himfelf as a candidate for that dignity, Sylla, from the elevated feat on which he was placed, ordered a Centurion to kill that candidate. While he was in the midft of the crowd, requefting their fuffrages, he was killed by the Centurion. The incenfed people brought him before Sylla as a criminal, who difmiffed them without redrefs, replying coolly: '*Let him go, for he has only executed my orders.*' A bafe

baſe and mournful ſilence cloſed your lips: there was not a right hand, there was not a Roman heart amidſt all that multitude; but every one retired, trembling with apprehenſion. Thus did he ſit by day in the Forum like an infernal Judge, condemning to perpetual puniſhments; and afterwards, a happy tyrant, revelled in his houſe by night, free from care and uneaſineſs. Hither flocked ſtage-players, muſicians, diſſolute and ſhameleſs youths, deceitful proſtitutes, and debauched paraſites. Sylla, prodigal of the property of the proſcribed, expended a great part of it in laſcivious pleaſures, in frivolous amuſements, in intemperate entertainments; and when he had deſtroyed all the beſt citizens, as if to make up for their loſs, he conferred the freedom on the moſt wicked of men. He inveſted with the privileges of Roman Citizens, ten thouſand of his freed men, youths obedient to the will of their implacable maſter. In this manner this proud deſtroyer raiſed himſelf on a pile of Roman heads; and after

he had deſtroyed by wars, by proſcriptions, by treachery, by aſſaſſinations, more than a hundred thouſand of you, amongſt whom were ninety Senators, and two thouſand Knights, he aſſumed, of himſelf, the titles of the Graceful, the Agreeable, and the Fortunate. After ſo much ſlaughter, indeed, he at length laid aſide the axe, and paſſed his laſt years in the calm of philoſophy; but it is uncertain whether it were from the extreme contempt in which he held you, or from the baſeneſs to which he had degraded your minds. It is, however, manifeſt, that your hearts, before ſo impatient of tyranny, were now ſo ſubmiſſive, that, though you had become maſters of your liberty, you remained ſlaves. Thus the ox, freed from the yoke, ſtands with his neck bent, expecting it anew.

" O Cicero! now come our unhappy times, when we beheld Cato, the moſt ſacred of citizens, driven from the Comitii with

with ſtones and clubs, and the Conſul Metellus dragged to priſon by the Tribune Flavius. Thou rememhereſt the cruel inſults of the Tribune Clodius, who excited the people in the Comitii to cover thee with mud. Thou ſaweſt, in thoſe tumults, the orator Hortenſius, almoſt dead with the effects of the popular rage, and the Senator Vibienus, ſlain. Thoſe conſular faſces, the ſight of which, in former times, was ſufficient to allay the fury of the mob, were now broken and deſpiſed by them. Clodius filled the Forum and the Comitii with wretches taken from the priſons, and with gladiators, who left in every ſtreet the traces of their cruelty. The Tiber, dyed with your blood, ſlowly rolled his heavy wave, choaked by the multitudes of the ſlain. Pompey, admirable for his actions, venerable for his goodneſs, had his toga ſtained with blood in the Comitii. No longer were offices obtained by ſuffrages, no longer did the candidates humbly canvaſs for them, but with

with audacious ambition, at the head of their armed ſatellites, made open war upon their opponents.

" When you conſider theſe corruptions, which I have rather hinted at than deſcribed, I think it will appear to thee, M. Brutus, and to this aſſembly, that true liberty had been entirely deſtroyed among us, by continued outrages; and that there remained nothing to be hoped for, but that an abſolute and vigorous authority would reſtrain unbridled licentiouſneſs. Hence thoſe exalted minds who diſdained ſlavery, were forced to endeavour to raiſe themſelves ſo high as to be above injury; which mode of thinking, full of glorious dangers, was embraced by me, and clearly manifeſted by my actions. Many others alſo expreſſed the ſame ſentiments, in various ways indeed, but all declaring that every hope of liberty was vain. You ſaw the great Lucullus, after having driven Tigranes and Mithridates before your eagles,

eagles, beyond the Tigris and Mount Taurus, consume, in idle retirement, the rest of his life, disdaining to expose himself to the insults of the vulgar. As much as he had once been celebrated for the glory of his triumphs, was he afterwards for the magnificence of his entertainments; by which effeminate neglect of the civil commotions, he clearly showed that he did not think them deserving of greater attention. And that Cato, who so much disdained my clemency at Utica, before he killed himself, left it to his son as his last advice, not to concern himself in public affairs, as being no longer worthy the care of an honest citizen. Mild and virtuous men deserted these walls, as if flying from a storm, and took shelter in the innocent enjoyments of domestic life: among wh m Pomponius remained at Athens much longer than was agreeable to us, who were desirous of enjoying his conversation. Thou, too, O Cicero, thought the country brought to so low a state, that to lament it thou

thou clothedst thyself in mourning; and after thy example, a great number of Patricians, and the Senate itself, appeared in those melancholy habits, as at the funeral ceremony of deceased liberty. And after the day of Pharsalia, which I should call fortunate if I had not conquered Romans, thou wast used to say, that it was necessary not only to yield, but to cast away your arms.

"In a country in so wretched a state, if country it might be called, two Citizens were celebrated for their illustrious and extraordinary actions, and had divided the Empire between them. One was Pompey, and I am myself the other. He was in Italy, and I in the Gauls, which I had, with no common degree of glory, reduced under your dominion. The fate of Rome was in suspence, every mind in perplexity, every power uncertain, except that of arms. The Senate, however, preserving, of its decayed greatness, nothing but the pride, dared to command me to

leave that army which was the inftrument of my triumphs, and truft myfelf, a private and defencelefs individual, to the civil difturbances. Although fuch a command was equally contemptible with that affembly, yet I profeffed myfelf ready to obey it, provided Pompey did the fame. I received, however, no anfwer, but that I muft obey, and that the Fathers would determine as they pleafed about my rival. Afterwards, under pretence of an expedition againft the Parthians, the Senate obliged me to give up two legions, which I did, blindly trufting their wicked diffimulation; for they were immediately united to Pompey's army, and remained in Italy to act againft me. Neverthelefs, I did not ceafe to affure the Fathers, that I was ready to obey them on thefe juft conditions; but they haughtily defpifed my fubmiffive letters. And fo fincere was my defire to avoid coming to extremities, that I at length propofed that Pompey fhould remain at the head of all the forces, provided I was left

one legion only, and the government of Illyricum. These (I may call them) mean conditions were heard with contempt by the Fathers, who even declared war against me as an enemy to my country. I then advanced to the banks of the Rubicon, constrained, I will not say, to commence hostilities, but to defend my own rights. But, as a son in the presence of a cruel mother, I felt my courage die in my breast, which till that day had been equal to greater undertakings. A cold hand so oppressed my heart, that, plunged in doubts, I turned to Asinius Pollio, who was near me, and said to him with emotion, "It is yet in our power to recede; but if once we pass over, arms alone can decide." He heard me without reply, and the rest by their silence condemned my hesitation. I advanced, however, as if I were plunging into an abyss, and shut the eyes of my understanding, that I might not behold its tremendous depth.

Then that magnanimous Pompey, who was continually boaſting that he could raiſe up whole legions out of the earth, by only ſtamping upon it with his foot, fled not only from Rome, but from Italy, though he had a greater number of troops. The people yielded to my ſquadrons, victorious rather by a generous clemency, than by the effuſion of blood. I purſued Pompey even into Greece, continually propoſing to him, in vain, reaſonable conditions of peace: I was then obliged to make the laſt trial of my fortune in Pharſalia, where I no longer knew the great Pompey, who, as if overcome by evil deſtiny, fled, after a poor reſiſtance. If in this immortal life I can remember with ſatisfaction any virtue I poſſeſſed in that precarious mortal ſtate, it certainly is the clemency with which I tempered, in that bloody day, the cruel conſequences of the conflict; for when I ſaw the victory certain, I traverſed my ſquadrons, exclaiming to my ſoldiers, *Spare the Romans!*" at which merciful command,

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the vanquiſhed remained ſecure in their camp, nor attempted to leave it, confiding in my generoſity. I, a Roman, ſtood, a joyleſs conqueror among the dead bodies of my countrymen. Then contemplating that lamentable fruit of the civil wars, with mournful cries heard both by the victors and the vanquiſhed, I did not ceaſe to lament the fatal neceſſity which had obliged me to draw the ſword, when every law was deſpiſed, every right vain, every authority diſregarded. Not ſatisfied with forgiving all who after that battle implored my pardon, I was deſirous to deprive myſelf of every cauſe for revenge; for having found a great many letters written to Pompey by his favourers, I cauſed them to be burned without reading any of them; thus concealing from myſelf the hatred of others, and chooſing to live in danger rather than ſuſpicion.

Thou, O Brutus, in that day of the battle, waſt thyſelf one of the chief objects

of my ſolicitude. Thou, a follower of Pompey, though he had ſlain thy father, ſtoodſt in Pharſalia oppoſed to me, who had always loved thee as a ſon. Traverſing the banks ready for the engagement, I commanded every ſoldier not to turn his arms againſt thee, but to give thee opportunity to eſcape from them. My heart, believe me, throbbed in my breaſt, when I led on citizens againſt citizens. I was particularly fearful leſt I ſhould meet thee, or ſee thee ſlain; but thou, thirſting for my blood, O man undeſervedly loved! mighteſt have honourably ſatiated thyſelf with it that day, by ſeeking me when thus expoſed to the chance of war. Certainly it was a more noble enterpriſe for thee, to fall in ſo bold an attempt, than to ſurvive to implore my clemency, to obtain it, to preſerve for many years revenge in thy heart, and friendſhip on thy countenance, and at length, rending the veil, to ſhow thyſelf completely treacherous and ungrateful. I appear even now to behold thee with thy

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reeking dagger and ferocious eyes, in which, too late, sensible of my error, I read the sentence of my death. I expired, I believe, rather with astonishment, than my wounds, when I saw among my assassins those very persons on whom I had conferred the greatest benefits, and in whom I placed all my confidence: when I beheld thee among them, I ceased to defend a life which, in fine, was become odious to thee. Covering my face with my toga, I abandoned myself to your daggers, and my soul plunged itself with a groan into the abyss of death. What my government may have been, whether paternal, mild and generous, it belongs to you, Romans, to bear free testimony. But thou, O Marcus! hast seen continual civil wars, not for liberty, but for the choice of a tyrant. Thy mind certainly was obscured by a fatal darkness, when thou hopedst that, after I was slain, no one would arise worse than me, and ready to subjugate a people of slaves.

FIFTH DIALOGUE.

The Gracchi.

CÆSAR was ſilent, and mournfully fixed his eyes upon Brutus, who bent his towards the ground. I then heard a mixture of voices, as of a multitude who are diſcourſing with different opinions on ſome great event. Cicero obſerved a modeſt ſilence, heſitating to decide in ſo important a cauſe; when Brutus, raiſing his head, ſlowly began:—"Thou ſpeakeſt like a tyrant as thou waſt, flattering and deceitful. Never was woman ſo ſkilful in ſeducing her lovers, as thou in enticing men to ſlavery. Ill, however, does it become thee to boaſt of having given their lives to thoſe from whom thou hadſt no right to take them away. It is the peculiar vice of tyrants to boaſt of their mercy, when they abſtain

abſtain from doing all the miſchief in their power. Certainly there is no clemency in ſparing the lives of thoſe who are defending their country and their ancient liberty. It is wrong to oppoſe them; it is a crime to kill them. Thou perhaps didſt not find, on thy hoſtile entrance into this city, the ſtreets deſerted, the houſes empty, the Conſuls, the Senate, the Patricians, the Prieſts, in ſhort, all the beſt citizens, gone to join Pompey. There was the real Country; and with thee there remained in theſe ſtreets only the timid Populace. Nor, to excuſe thy crime, oughteſt thou to recur to the pretended neceſſity of abſolute power; for this would be reaſoning like the empyric who kills the patient, and then argues that he could not live. Thou haſt artfully dwelt upon our civil commotions, in order to lead the way to that concluſion, ſuitable to thy purpoſe, that abſolute power alone could appeaſe them. But if Pompey had had fortune as well as juſtice on his ſide, thou wouldſt have ſeen that the

country

country was not in that desperate condition. He, terrible to our enemies, and mild and generous to us, never elated with glory, but always modest in the midst of the most prosperous circumstances, desired no distinction in his country, but a free confidence in his sincere virtue. In proportion as his triumphs exalted him above all, so did he delight in descending to the common level. He, obedient to the civil institutions, a sincere lover of concord, respectful to the Senate, was not so proud of any title as that of Citizen: thou, on the contrary, boastedst of nothing so much as of despising that venerable Assembly, ridiculing every law, and calling thy country insane. To this end thou hast related the atrocities of Sylla, and such indeed they were; but he at least, either weary or satiated, laid aside the axe, and said, 'Behold me ready and prepared to give an account of all the blood I have shed:' which action diffuses a wonderful splendour over those atrocities. He slew many citizens, but not the

country:

try: thou haſt ſlain both. But I am aſtoniſhed at nothing ſo much as at thy reproach for my having killed thee by treachery: and in what other manner can or ought theſe enterpriſes to be executed? All the beſt citizens knew and commended my deſign; nor was I determined to it, but by their continual and unanimous entreaties. That war was much more juſt than thine in Pharſalia, though not equally ſucceſsful. In fine, ſuch is thy licentiouſneſs, that thou calleſt me thy ſon, and reproveſt me for having offended that tender bond of nature; but regard to decorum forbids the effects of guilty familiarities to be diſcloſed. If I was begotten by thee in a bed not thine own, I killed thee that my country might live. I poſtponed all other paſſions to my love for her; my heart was of ice for all affections unconnected with this, and inflamed only with the deſire of ſuch a noble revenge. I hated not Cæſar, however, but his tyranny. My hand trembled when I plunged the dagger into him;

my

fortitude was ſhaken, my virtue was in danger. Now then let it ſuffice thee, O magnanimous enemy, to have rendered wavering, even for a moment, the reſolution of Brutus." He ſaid, and ceaſed. Then he held out his hand to the Dictator, who graſped it with tenderneſs, and dignified tears ſeemed to ſteal down both their cheeks.

The two illuſtrious enemies remained ſtill in that attitude, when a Matron, holding in her hand two youths, of a bold aſpect, ſtepped forth from the crowd, and exclaimed, "Behold, Romans, the firſt victims of tyranny, your ill-rewarded defenders. Let no one boaſt of having ſuffered more than they for ſo illuſtrious a cauſe; and let no mother pretend to have brought forth among us better citizens than theſe." Thus ſaying, ſhe let go the two youths from her hand, puſhed them into the midſt, and added, "Now do ye ſpeak." Then one of them began, with a melancholy

voice: "I hope that you recollect in me, Tiberius Gracchus: this is my brother Caius, and it is unneceſſary to put you in mind that this is our mother Cornelia. You eaſily recollect the daughter of Scipio Africanus, the heireſs of his magnanimity. We have been driven here by the confuſion now excited in this region of death. Thou oughteſt, O mother, to conſole thyſelf, ſince thou ſeeſt here, after ſo long a period, the tombs which contain the glorious aſhes of thy race." As a cloud veils on a ſudden the ſplendour of the moon, ſo theſe words obſcured with ſadneſs the majeſtic countenance of the Matron. Her ſons, ſtretching out their arms to her, ſeemed to conſole her. The whole multitude preſerved a profound ſilence, a manifeſt ſign of reverential expectation: when, behold, the Matron, with indignant hand, removed the veil from her face, and ſhook her head, ſo that her diſhevelled hair floated on her ſhoulders. Then ſhe exclaimed: "Wretched bones, in vain bathed with our tears!

Neither the reputation of your actions, nor the ſplendour of your virtues, have then ſufficed to preſerve you from the moſt unworthy inſults? Neither our care to place you in theſe tombs, nor your names which are engraved upon them, could ſhelter you from the injuries of fortune. Yet we ſaw the Romans approach theſe urns in mournful ſilence. Unhappy me! who left my frail body in Miſenum, where I paſſed the laſt part of my ſtormy life, relating with a noble pride your misfortunes, O my generous children, and thoſe of my illuſtrious father! Thou, however, leſs unhappy than theſe, O great Africanus, becauſe removed from an ungrateful country, paſſedſt the laſt years of thy life in dignified retirement at Lintermum, when thou threweſt off thy mortal covering!" So ſaying, ſhe tore the band from her hair, and tears of anger diſtilled from her eyes. Then Tiberius thus mildly addreſſed her:—"O mother, nothing here below is exempt from the empire of Time. Nations illuſtrious before us, endured its injuries,

injuries, as we endure them at this moment. The lapſe of ages, impelling wave after wave, overwhelms all human greatneſs, and ſinks it into the abyſs of oblivion. Generations appear and diſappear upon the earth, like fleeting ſhadows. The living walk over the tombs of their anceſtors; and deſtroying whilwinds at length ſcatter into duſt the proud ſtructures, the humble tombs, the lamented aſhes. Ah! mother, do not then contend with the common and eternal fate!" She anſwered with intrepidity: "No time ought to extinguiſh the glory of the Scipios, ſince it fills the univerſe with its ſplendour. Certainly Italy is now expoſed to the ravages of barbarians and pirates, or perhaps is deſerted, or in the power of conquerors, who have overwhelmed our hiſtory in the blood of the vanquiſhed. No one any longer underſtands our language: the fame of ancient glory has never reached them; for, otherwiſe, they would not thus abuſe theſe tombs, on which are carved ſuch illuſ-

trious names." At which words, I was on the point of rushing forward into the midst, to defend our age; but I was restrained by the desire of hearing those surprising conversations, by disturbing of which with troublesome interruptions, I feared lest I should cause the Shades to depart in anger.

"In the mean time, Cicero, Cæsar, Brutus, Antony, and the most illustrious Shades, regarded with eager anxiety those celebrated countenances, with which, as living in after-times, they were unacquainted. The aspect of Tiberius was sedate and mild, that of Caius disturbed and angry: their age appeared below the thirtieth year. The features of Cornelia were of mature beauty, untouched by the ravages of time; they preserved no traces of feminine softness. Her almost martial eyes, her severe brow, her swelling and composed lips, strangers to laughter, gave to her countenance a chaste and dignified

nified elegance. But Tiberius, looking round him, thus mildly began: Your ancient kindneſs, O my Romans, appears to me to be ſtill expreſſed in your incorporeal images. You remember me, who died for your liberty. This city, called country by the rich, was to us only the theatre of their tyranny. Perpetually oppreſſed by uſury, always overwhelmed with debts, always laviſh of our blood, we were driven to war by the Conſuls, that they might not be wearied by our juſt complaints. The Patricians filled the ears of others with thoſe venerable words—Country, Republic, Glory, greatneſs of the Roman People; but heaped their own coffers with gold, and revelled in ſplendid entertainments. It was eſtabliſhed from the foundation of the Republic, by the well-known and always evaded Licinian law, that the public lands, conquered by the army, ſhould be divided among the people; but thoſe very fields whoſe furroughs were fattened by our blood, were always given to Patricians, who, while we were ſhedding it

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in profusion, were lying at sumptuous entertainments. I, chosen tribune for you, poor and brave, whose honourable scars appeared through your threadbare habits, opposed myself to this ancient robbery. The methods I used in attacking it were those of a citizen, namely, the law, and reason. But our insidious adversaries artfully conveyed away from the Assembly the balloting urns and the rolls, just as the suffrages were on the point of being taken. My first endeavours being evaded by this artifice, my second were opposed with open atrocity. You saw the Fathers in their gowns rush upon me, supported in their perfidious violence by their slaves and clients. I endeavoured to appease the tumult by words; but no human voice could overcome the immense uproar of the Comitii, tempestuous as the ocean. Not being able, therefore, to express in any other way the danger in which I stood, I put my hand to my head, meaning to shew that it was exposed to imminent hazard. I then saw the Consul

Scipio Nafica gather up his toga with his left hand, lift up his right, and fuddenly rufh againft me, at the head of the Senate and of his fatellites: he was certainly ufing fome violent and angry expreffions, as was manifeft from his lips and his eyes, though I heard not what they were. The patrician fury came upon me like an overwhelming wave: the Confcript Fathers broke, in their rage, the benches of the Comitii, and, armed with the fragments, attacked my defencelefs and facred perfon. The populace gave way to the Fathers, if oppreffors can be fo called, and even fubmitted to be laid prof-trate by their blows: dragged along by my robes, and feverely wounded in the temples, I expired, grieving at the fate of Rome more than at my own. If there remain in you any gratitude for me, who died for you in fo miferable a manner, ah! let fome one tell me, why fuch a fury was excited when I touched my forehead, and by whom was I flain?" At which requeft Caius exclaimed; "O brother, after fo many

many ages, happily found in this ocean of death, why doſt thou deſire to hear enormities, greater than thoſe which thou in vain endeavouredſt to correct? That motion of thine was, with ready treachery, interpreted by the Senators as a ſign that thou demandedſt the regal diadem: they artfully exclaimed, magnifying this deſire of thine, to excite againſt thee the fury of the mob. The Conſul Scipio Naſica, in the attitude in which thou ſaweſt him, called out, *Whoever wiſhes his country to be ſafe, let him follow me:* along with whom ruſhed the order of the Patricians, as if dragged, by a deſperate pilot, to a ſhipwreck with their common country. We then ſaw the toga, the ſign of eloquence and peace, bring deſtruction, and demand blood. Thou, borne down by the preſſing crowd, waſt wounded in the head with the fragments of the benches by thy own colleagues Satireius and Rufus: and ſuch pride did they take in their wickedneſs, that Rufus was uſed afterwards to boaſt

of

of thofe blows as of a glorious action. In that tumult, not lefs than three hundred citizens remained dead in the Forum. In vain did I afk thy body of the ferocious Patricians, defirous of beftowing upon it the funeral honours: it was thrown into the Tiber, and defcended to the fea, the fports of the winds. The Senate, however, not fatiated by this flaughter, afterwards drove many into exile, and beheaded many, becaufe they poffeffed free minds, and favoured juftice. Amongft whom Caius Billius, fhut up in a cafk full of ferpents, gratified the rage of the Senators, who invented, on this occafion, that deteftable punifhment. But thy death, and thefe cruelties, were fo far from abating my courage, that they rather ferved to excite it. The day in which the people were at length to receive the rewards acquired by their valour, my wife prefaging that I fhould return no more to her embraces, threw herfelf fuppliantly at my feet, upon the threfhold of my

houfe,

houſe, preſſing one of our children to her timid boſom: I, however, in that laſt and moſt glorious day of my life, inflamed only by my noble deſign, kept my heart cold to thoſe affections which are uſed to overcome even ſavage beaſts. I left, with a ſevere ſilence, that door into which I was no more to enter, and ſaw the wretched woman fall down in it in a ſwoon, perhaps dead. I was not ſtopped by any compaſſion either for her or for my ſon, but led by love for my country to the Comitii. The fortitude of Brutus was certainly aſtoniſhing, who condemned his children to death for the ſafety of Rome; but he at leaſt condemned youths who were traitors to her: whereas, I ſaw my wife fall, who was not only innocent, but diſtinguiſhed by the beauty of her mind and perſon, and amiable for the rectitude of her manners.

SIXTH DIALOGUE.

Argumentative Discourse concerning the death of Scipio Emilianus, and conclusion of that of Cæsar the Dictator.

SCARCELY had he thus ſpoken, when a female Spirit appeared, with an air of ſoft modeſty: ſhe ſlowly removed the veil from her face, and kept her dewy eyelids bent towards the ground. He, perplexed at her ſight, remained ſilent; but afterwards ſtretching out his arms to her, joyfully exclaimed: "Art thou, then, Licinia, whom I have continually ſought in vain, in this eternal wandering?" And ſhe, with a tender voice, replied: "Yes, I am ſhe, I am thy unhappy wife. That day was not my laſt, but I dragged on afterwards a ſhort and wretched exiſtence, more melancholy even than death. All of us who were made widows by that fatal quarrel,

quarrel, were forbidden to put on mourning, and I was alſo ſtripped of my portion. Thus our Patrician enemies, extended, even to the weaker ſex, their rancorous malignity. Not leſs than three thouſand citizens fell in the conflict of that day, in which the Tiber was dyed with Roman blood. Fulvius, who had been Conſul, and had triumphed over the Gauls, the moſt diſtinguiſhed of thy ſupporters, was ſlain by the Fathers in a bath, together with one of his ſons: another of his ſons, in his eighteenth year, beautiful and innocent, remained as a hoſtage in the hands of the implacable Senators. He ſupplicated for compaſſion, and would have obtained it of rocks, but he obtained it not from the ferocious Patricians, and was put to death. Then Caius angrily exclaimed: "Behold the recompence given to the defenders of your liberty, O ungrateful people, and unworthy to enjoy it! I came into the Aſſembly, that execrable day, without arms, without defence: the laws were my ſhield, and

words

words were my weapons. The Consuls, on the contrary, had with them a body of most skilful Cretan archers, whom they had hired to pierce the hearts of Romans. The people, overpowered, fled to Mount Aventine, where a dreadful slaughter was made of them. I still boast of not having drawn a sword in that cruel day, ready to die innocent, rather than conquer by a crime: yet I, your Tribune, the brother of him, who, a little before, was dear to you, who had died in your cause, was abandoned by you to the fury of the Fathers. There was not one among you who attempted to defend me; you saw me oppressed, without assisting me, but by words, many of you vilely exhorting me to fly. I retired at length, and took shelter, as in an asylum suitable to my despair, in the grove consecrated to the Furies; it was agitated by a wind that corresponded to my complaints against the ungrateful people, and the malice of Fortune. None remained with me, except my slave Philocrates, who

afforded me the laſt kind office, by plunging a ſword into my heart."

Here the Tribune ceaſed: his wife mournfully leaned both her hands upon his ſhoulder, and reſted upon it her roſy cheek, in an attitude of tender ſorrow. He turned his countenance towards her, on which were painted all the conflicting emotions of fortitude and commiſeration. While he was ſpeaking, I had noticed, that as much as his brother was grave, ſedate, and reſerved in his manner, ſo he declaimed with a vehemence that often approached to anger. All the Spectres ſeemed to be ſilently revolving in their minds the diſcourſe they had heard: in which interval, I ſaw an armed Shade advance, like a warrior ready for the combat. He ſhook his arms with a threatening air, and at the ſame fixed his angry eyes on the two brother Tribunes; the air reſounded with the rattling of his armour. They were ſilent, as if overcome by ſurpriſe; but their mother turned her majeſtic

jeſtic eyes towards the daring Spirit, reſting her left hand upon her ſide, and her right on one of the tombs of her family. The new Shade then began: "Well do I recollect ye, ſeditious brothers; ye are that race fatal to your country, who, though without arms, made a war againſt her, more ruinous than any open violence. You, ſeducing the people with the impoſſible equality of fortunes, excited pernicious tumults, not only in Rome, but all over Italy. Though the law ſo much promoted by you were uſeful and juſt at the beginning, yet, after it had been tranſgreſſed for ages, it was impoſſible to enforce the obſervance of it, without cauſing an entire confuſion and uncertainty with reſpect to property. Such a diſturbance of juſtice was very properly oppoſed by the Scipios, their heads crowned with triumphal laurel; for Naſica ſlew thee, O Tiberius, in a juſt and neceſſary war, in the Forum, as a public enemy. And I alſo openly oppoſed thee, O wicked Caius; I, ſon to the great tri-

umphant Paulus Emilius; I, though not born in the family of the Scipios, yet adopted into, and worthy of it; I, the destroyer of Carthage, your defender, O Romans, and the terror of your enemies, Scipio Emilianus. Now you Plebeian brothers, more united by crimes than by blood, have related our cruelties, but have artfully passed over your own in silence. But who shed the first blood in those fatal commotions which you had excited? You atrocious populace, always unworthy of liberty, because you depraved it by licentiousness. You, abject when oppressed, haughty when free, were guilty of the first outrage on the sacred person of the Tribune Octavius. While he was haranguing in the rostrum, he was dragged from it by the ferocious multitude, and was with difficulty preserved by the astonishing fidelity of a slave. He, more worthy of liberty than you, opposed himself to the crowd to ward off the blows, till both his eyes were beaten out of his head. I think I see him even now, groping

about

about the forum, with the bloody hollows of his extinguiſhed eyes, aſking for ſome one to give him an account of his maſter. Grieve, therefore, for yourſelves, who firſt ſet an example of laying impious hands upon the Tribunes, and who, deſpiſing all authority, rendered violence neceſſary. I am myſelf a fatal example of your ferocity, who, though the huſband of your ſiſter Sempronia, preferred affection for my country, to regard for my relations. I was as the guide on whom all turned their eyes, and their hopes for the common ſafety. I defended it in the Forum by my voice, and with the moderation becoming a citizen. Yet behold me waked in the night, as I lay in the peaceful bed with my wife, by an unknown aſſaſſin, who ſuddenly ſtrangled me. My mind yet doubted whether I were ſuffering death, or the horrors of a frightful dream, when I was plunged into this eternal darkneſs. Certainly it is a happy death to fall in the field of victory, and to behold with dying eyes the flying enemy; but to

perish by cruel treachery in my bed, in my sleep, is a death which still awakens to revenge my angry imagination."

Cornelia listened with a majestic silence, unmoved in her attitude, intrepid in her countenance; and when he ceased, she began: "If thou lamentest that thy life was cut off, beyond thy eleventh lustrum, when thou wast satiated with glory and fortune, what should not be the grief of these my sons, slain in the cruel manner you have heard; at the dawn of illustrious days, in the prime of life, the hopes of the people, the terror of tyranny, the admiration of Rome? When they fell, they were lamented by all Italy, but not by these eyes. A dignified joy was much more suitable to a woman like me, of illustrious family, and the mother of Tribunes victims in so noble a cause. I boast of having produced these who died, though in vain, for your sakes, O my Romans! I grieve only, that, when these were killed, I had no others to suffer,

in the ſame manner, the rage of the Senators, the treachery of the Nobles, the ſnares of the Patricians, in ſo great a conteſt. I know not who was the author of thy unhappy death; but I know that thou, adopted by my brother as his ſon, madeſt thyſelf the leader of tyranny againſt my ſon Caius. I know that the Senate offered for the head of Caius its weight in gold, as a reward to him who ſhould produce it ſevered from the body. I know that the Patrician Septimuleius brought it to the Conſul Lucius Opimius, having firſt poured melted lead into it, in order to obtain a complete recompence. O Romans, you ſaw the head of this ſon of the country, rather than mine, weighed in the ſcale againſt an equal quantity of gold, and a recompence given at the ſame time to atrocity and fraud!"

The Spectre of Caius appeared violently agitated at this moſt afflicting account; but Emilianus, not yet ſatisfied with reſpect to his enquiry, inſiſting upon it, continued: "Here

"Here then only the misfortunes of seditious Tribunes are lamented, and no one knows, or dares at least relate, what was reported concerning my assassins?" He ceased, and waited with a calm air for a reply. I then heard a murmur of confused words; and it seemed as if some Shades were already coming forward, in order to reveal the fatal secret, and that others restrained them by laying their hands upon their mouths. In the mean time, I saw a Spirit pass hastily by, who seemed anxious to escape from the crowd. Its countenance was that of a timid woman; and solicitous to conceal it, she covered herself with a veil. But a Spectre overtook her, seized her loose hair, tore her veil, and shewing to Emilianus her mournful countenance, said:—"Behold her! dost thou not recollect her?" The latter suddenly exclaimed: "O Sempronia, O my wife, why dost thou fly me, and why art thou thus treated?" "Peace," answered with anger the Shade that detained her; "for there was a dismal report,

report, that in that thy last night, she shewed herself much more the sister of the Gracchi, than thy wife; therefore was she flying, driven by the consciousness of her guilt." While he was speaking, the lady shook her head, and endeavoured to free her hair from the hand that grasped it, but in vain; for the Spectre holding her still faster, threatening knit his brows, and fixed upon her his angry eyes. She kept her countenance bent towards the ground, and scarcely dared to raise it up a little, to look at her husband, but immediately turned it away again, as if his sight were painful to her. All the Spectres were plunged in mournful silence, when Emilianus put his hand to his forehead, as if expressing horror at such a suspicion. Fixing then his eyes upon the Spectre who kept the lady confined, and recollecting, he exclaimed:— "Ah! my beloved Lælius, then thou still preservest for me thy soothing and fraternal affection!" He, in a transport of joy, released the lady, held out his right hand,

and

and anſwered:—“ Virtue is immortal.” Then looking at the lady, who fled as ſoon as ſhe was freed, he added:—“ Know, that ſhe ſurvived thee, covered with diſgraceful ſuſpicions. There was current a ſhocking report, that in that treachery ſhe was the cruel inſtrument of the plebeian conſpiracy. Thou ſaweſt ſhe had not courage to turn towards thee her inſidious eyes, to move her deceitful lips, to ſupport thy preſence. O fatal race! nor waſt thou, Caius, exempt from ſuſpicion of being concerned in that dark action; nor waſt thou, Cornelia, though of diſtinguiſhed character, free from odious imputations on this mournful occaſion.”

At theſe words the Matron, with increaſed majeſty, demanded ſilence with her right hand, fixed her eyes on Emilianus himſelf, and intrepidly replied:—“ Certainly, O my Romans, I know not which of our deſtinies was moſt unworthy; mine, to be the ſubject of ſo ridiculous a calumny; or yours, to

live

live in the midſt of ſuch corruption, that its outrages ſhould reach even to Cornelia. Expoſed on high to the notice of all, I was diſtinguiſhed for my exemplary manners, and for the unſpotted innocence of my life. My thoughts were by nature expreſſed upon my countenance; nor was there, in that age, any one bold enough to dare to diſcloſe to me ſo vile an opinion. The moſt diſtinguiſhed citizens frequented my houſe, to the laſt years of my life; and in the ſolitude in which I paſſed them, and by a common kindneſs, I was looked upon by you all as a mother. All reaſon for diſguiſing the truth is now done away: here every one may freely lay open the virtues and vices of his life. If I had had any concern in thy myſterious death, inſtead of denying it, I would rejoice at it, as an action uſeful to my country. Not, however, with treachery, not in the ſilence of darkneſs, would Cornelia have executed any noble vengeance, but in the ſight of you, of the earth, and of the univerſe."

Here

Here ſhe ceaſed, and looked with dignity around, to ſee if any one would accuſe her. A reverential ſilence manifeſted the conviction of her innocence, till a voice exclaimed:—"O daughter of Africanus, thy virtue riſes to heaven like a rock, at whoſe feet the ſtorms of calumny rage in vain!" Then Lælius continued:—"Magnanimous woman, that affection, which you all know I had in life for this honour of our country, makes me ſtill grieve for his cruel death. The memory of that barbarous event is now renewed in my diſtreſſed imagination. But here, where falſehood is uſeleſs, the voice of this multitude would be ſufficient to defend thee, if thy own did not of itſelf enſure thy triumph."

While they had been thus converſing, the Shade of Caius diſappeared, as ſhunning that teſt of truth. The mother was afflicted at his flight; her noble courage ſeemed depreſſed, and ſhe regarded Tiberius with a ſorrowful and ſuſpicious eye. He, by

by his humble looks, and his ſilence, ſhewed that neither his eloquence, nor brotherly affection, were ſufficient to defend the cauſe of the culprit. At which the Dictator ſmiled a little, and turning to Brutus, ſaid: "See if ſuch corruption could be called liberty." He anſwered: "It was happy for thee to be born in a country overrun with vices, ſince thy own found there daily exerciſe, ready occaſions, opportunities prepared. If thou hadſt lived in the moderate times of civil equality, thy diſpoſition, incapable of enduring it, would then have ſhewn itſelf more clearly." "Thou art miſtaken," anſwered Cæſar; "I ſhould certainly have deſired to ſurpaſs all in glory, but not in power. I drew the ſword, not to oppreſs, Pompey, but that I might not be oppreſſed by him. What I ſhould have been in a well-regulated State, appears from what I was in a corrupt one: for where cruelty was applauded, clemency derided, and vengeance neceſſary, I tempered my good fortune with benignity and humanity. If

I ought to repent of any virtue, it is of that by which man exalts himself to a resemblance of the divine nature; namely, a facility to pardon. Sylla, reeking with the blood of the citizens, enjoyed a tranquil old-age in rural retirement; and I, always prodigal of my blood, and avaricious of yours, fell a victim to ingratitude." Thus saying, he fixed his eyes upon Brutus, and angry emotions seemed to be rising in his breast. The latter also was disturbed at such a reproof, so that this long-past event gave birth to new resentment in those generous minds. But Cicero, interposing, said: "Peace, O illustrious rivals! it sufficiently afflicts us to see the greatest minds among us not yet appeased. Though so different in opinions and manners, both were admirable, one for a certain severe and almost divine virtue in the midst of corruption, the other for his goodness when possessed of absolute power. If liberty were not the noblest of possessions, it were certainly grateful to be subject to the power of the Dictator: call him a tyrant,

if you please, but of all tyrants he was the best; and as there never was a better citizen than Brutus, so there never was a despot more moderate than Cæsar at the summit of power. You both left to the world an incredible proof, though in different ways, of the excellence of your nature. One remained the only torch of virtue in a night of vices; the other, plunged in a cruel sea of blood and wickedness, preserved his innocence, as far as is consistent with exalted prosperity." At these words, pronounced by the orator with a mildness that would have moderated anger in any breast, it was speedily calmed in those who, in life, had taken so much pleasure in his splendid discourses: as the clouds fly before the breath of the Zephyr, so every angry emotion disappeared from their features. The Dictator first held out his victorious hand; and then Brutus covered his face with the lap of his toga, so as to conceal from others the sensibility that overcame him. Cicero, who had never before seen on that austere

countenance any ſign of tender emotions, was ready to ſhed tears of ſoft complacency at this effect of his words. The mournful ſilence of the ſurrounding multitude was changed into a plaintive ſound, like the ſea heard at a diſtance. I already felt the drops of pity flow down my cheeks at ſeeing thoſe illuſtrious minds thus affected, and for ſo intereſting a cauſe; when Cicero, ſtruck by a ſudden thought, ſaid to me with affectionate ſadneſs: "The world now turns this hemiſphere to the rays of the ſun, and we are conſtrained to retire to the oppoſed darkneſs."

He was yet talking, when the Spectres were diſſipated like ſmoke: his own voice failed while he was ſpeaking, as if a celeſtial command obliged him to fly. He diſappeared, in pronouncing theſe laſt words; and I remained, eagerly looking, my heart beating, my eyes plunged in darkneſs. I ſcarcely knew whether I were alive or dead, awake or dreaming. The various

diſcourſes,

diſcourſes, the innumerable Spectres, ſtill filled my mind with aſtoniſhment, and my heart with tender commiſeration. Afterwards, grieving becauſe forſaken by thoſe illuſtrious Spirits, uncertain if I ſhould ſee or hear them more, I invoked them with a ſupplicating voice; but my cries reſounded without effect, among the inexorable tombs. I turned back, with uncertain ſteps, groping along among the bones which cracked ſometimes beneath my tottering feet, and ſaw once more the light of heaven. Already Aurora ſpread her roſy veil, which was ſhaken by the ſweet breath of the Zephyr, preceding the triumphal chariot of the Sun. To me, who had juſt emerged from the darkneſs below, it was grateful to breathe that dewy air. I went then to my home, where, now oppreſſed with wearineſs, I laid me down to reſt; but my thoughts, during my ſleep, turned upon thoſe images which had taken full poſſeſſion of my ſoul.

END OF THE FIRST NIGHT.

THE ROMAN NIGHTS.

SECOND NIGHT.

FIRST DIALOGUE.

Marius, ſtill inflamed with anger, relates the events of his diſaſtrous flight.

GREAT and extraordinary occurrences take ſuch poſſeſſion of the mind, that they uſurp over it an all-powerful dominion. Hence the incredible prodigies to which I alone was witneſs, diſturbed my heart, and at the ſame time filled my mind with ſoothing contemplations. My ſoul, now forgetful of time, tranſported itſelf entirely to paſt ages; the concerns of this life appeared to me as a dream, and the common language of men vulgar, in compariſon of

thoſe

those images and those discourses which remained painted before my eyes, and sounding in my ears. It is a wearisome silence to conceal any stupendous event, which, as a heavy weight, oppresses the breast; but it is delightful to disclose it to another, not less for him who hears it than to him who relates it. And as drinking sea-water does not quench our thirst, but rather increases the burning heat of our mouths, so I felt a more eager desire for new apparitions, after I had enjoyed such wonderful delight from these; and although I had long entertained such wishes, yet they were often checked by the consideration that they were useless: now they were become insatiable and tormenting. They were mournfully contrasted by the fear lest the first Night of the so-much-longed-for conversations should be also the last. Driven by these thoughts, I continually looked to see how far the sun had proceeded in his luminous journey, and I thought he travelled slowly towards the West. At length the earth and the sky were involved in darkness,

neſs, and I was rejoiced at it, from my anxiety to return to thoſe monuments. O fooliſh deſire! ſince time flies, never to return, and hurries us on to the tomb. Thus the gnawing cares of the ſoul make it deſire to loſe that time, whoſe loſs is afterwards a cauſe of eternal regret. As ſoon as the light of heaven was extinguiſhed, I eagerly deſcended into thoſe ſecret retreats, in expectation of new wonders. With my eyes fixed as thoſe of a ſtatue, with hair like that of Meduſa, with a countenance pale as of one who hears the ſentence of death, I ſtood invoking the Spectres. But long and in vain my voice reſounded in that gloomy ſolitude; and now giving up all hope, I was retiring with tottering ſteps from thoſe dark caverns, when behold, the uſual phoſphoric light ſhone afreſh, and not only the Shades I had already ſeen, but innumerable others, ſuddenly flocked together. Among them I eaſily diſtinguiſhed my friend Cicero, who, advancing towards me, exclaimed:

"Hail,

"Hail, courteous descendant, who feelest admiration and compassion for us, as is manifest from the noble confidence which led thee to penetrate here at first, and now to return again! Thy breast seems now relieved from that troublesome fear which makes the living afraid of the dead. Thou seest we are incorporeal, not adapted either by disposition or nature to injure thy earthly frame. When, after the short dream which is called life, this shall be scattered into dust, thou wilt remain, like us, pure element. It would then be a childish dread, in a man as thou art, to fear us, who are only the finest substance of the human composition. It is not in those frail members, the sport of death, that thy true essence consisteth, but in that faculty by which thou reasonest, feelest, art sensible to joy and grief, and seekest continually to immerse thyself in supreme felicity. It would then be more conformable to reason that we should have an aversion from thee, than thou from us; for rapid, free, and pure intelligences,

telligences, are wearied by the flowneſs of your thoughts, oppreſſed by the burden of the periſhable members."

When he ceaſed, I reſpectfully anſwered: "O admirable Conſul, and ſtill more admirable Orator! ſo great a pleaſure is it to ſee and to hear thee, that, inſtead of fearing thy ſight or thy voice, I would joyfully encounter the greateſt difficulties in order to converſe with thee, and under thy guidance to be acquainted with theſe illuſtrious Spirits, and participate their ſublime ideas. Now tell me, who is that large and robuſt Shade, that, with threatening countenance and fierce eyes, advances with a formidable air, though ſilent and unarmed?" And Cicero anſwered: "Thou ſeeſt a great and cruel Spirit, of whom it is doubtful whether his valour be more worthy of commendation, or his atrocity of blame. He is Caius Marius, the conqueror of Jugurtha and of the Cimbri, and whoſe reputation, I imagine, cannot be unknown

among

among you." I then turned my eyes, anxious to contemplate the true image of ſo brave and ſo wicked a Roman. In the mean time he himſelf afforded me an opportunity of obſerving him to more advantage; for he made an authoritative and ſomewhat diſdainful motion with his right hand, by which he cleared away from before his ample breaſt the vulgar Shades. They, lowly murmuring, yielded with reſpectful admiration: when Marius, with a haughty voice, began—"And where art thou, Julius Cæſar, who, a little while ago, diſturbedſt the ſilence of death with accuſations againſt the exceſſes of my juſt revenge? I knew thee only when a boy; and I am now diſpleaſed at the boldneſs with which thou inſulteſt my glory, who, when alive, was called the ſecond founder of Rome." Cæſar came forward with dignity, and ſaid: "Behold me! I attend to thee." Marius looked at him fiercely, and appeared to refrain with difficulty from angry expreſſions; then he began:—"A country like this, guilty of blood, by

by blood alone could expiate its crimes. Sylla entered it, as into a city taken by ſtorm, and I, abandoned by your cowardice, was conſtrained to fly. There remained with me only my ſon-in-law, Geranius, with whom I reached Oſtia, whence we ſet ſail with a fair wind. But the heavens, emulating my fickle fortune, were ſuddenly darkened by a dreadful ſtorm. The inexorable tempeſt drove the veſſel to the ſhores of Italy, as if deſirous to give me up to the aſſaſſins of Sylla, who traverſed it like hounds in purſuit of a wild beaſt. I, diſtinguiſhed for glorious dangers, the terror of the barbarians, the defender of Italy, in which the fame of my exploits ought to have collected followers to admire and to ſupport me, then reduced even to fly from it as a purſued criminal, and to confide my ſafety to a wretched bark, avoided my native ſhore, all covered with traitors. But cruel fortune obliged the pilot to approach the Circean coaſt. Here I remained the melancholy ſport of cruel deſtiny. The angry

ſea roared againſt me, the earth was faithleſs, the ſkies inauſpicious. I was periſhing with want, and walking with trembling ſteps along the deſert ſtrand : at one time I feared, at another I wiſhed to meet ſome fellow-creatures: not to ſee them, was wretched deſolation; to ſee them, manifeſt danger. While I was ſlowly walking, with my looks caſt down, along the ſtormy ſhore, I met ſome cowherds, who, after they knew me, had the compaſſion to inform me, that there were in thoſe parts many of thoſe who ſought my life; and although the blood left in my veins, after I had ſhed the greateſt part of it for the glory of Rome, was ſold by her, with the offer of a great reward to thoſe who ſhould betray me, I obtained aſtoniſhing kindneſs from thoſe men, who by my death might have bettered their miſerable ſituation: they even lamented this, as it afforded them no means of refreſhing my wearied limbs. I therefore concealed myſelf in a foreſt, as one degraded from the rank of a citizen to the life of a ſavage. The night

already covered the ſky, of which my eyes could catch only here and there a glimpſe through the leaves: wearied as they were with watching and diſtreſs, they were kept awake by anger. The ſtormy wind ſhook the foreſt, the raging tempeſt whiſtled through the thick branches, and the lofty trees, torn up by the roots, fell proſtrate with impetuous ruin. I heard the wolves howl, from famine or from terror, and the ruſtling of the dry leaves, occaſioned by the ſerpents that glided through them. But do not pity theſe diſtreſſes, for to a warrior victory was ever more grateful than life: imagine only the anguiſh of my mind, the rage of my heart, the deſperate complaints againſt my fortune, and your ingratitude, which were loſt in the tempeſtuous air. Morning at length drew me from the foreſt, determined to combat my cruel deſtiny; ſupported only by my revenge, I proceeded along the ſhore, travelling towards Minturnæ. Here I immediately fell in with the ſoldiers of Sylla, my indefatigable

gable purſuers. I threw myſelf into the water, and ſwam towards two ſhips at a little diſtance, to take refuge in them. My heavy, aged, vaſt, and wearied limbs, with difficulty performed this office; ſo that the danger of being drowned was imminent. In the mean while I heard thoſe aſſaſſins from the ſhore putting up cruel vows to Neptune and Nereus, to overwhelm me in their abyſs; invoking the voracious monſters of the deep, and inſulting, with abuſive raillery, my diſtreſſed ſituation. Then they threatened the ſailors if they ſheltered me, and offered them a reward if they would inhoſpitably reject me. But the humanity of the latter prevailed; they took me out of the water, and gave me an aſylum in their ſhips. Thoſe barbarians, however, did not ceaſe to call out to them from the ſhore, to throw me again into the ſea; ſo that I was reduced to the humiliation, inſufferable to the conqueror of ſo many nations, humbly to ſolicit, in their bark, ſuch vulgar men; to diſcloſe to them

my illuſtrious name, and at the ſame time, my ignominious fortune. Reverence for the one overcame, however, the injuries of the other: they boldly anſwered, that they would not comply with thoſe ferocious requeſts, and abandoned themſelves to the wind. They afterwards turned towards the mouth of the Liris, where they entered and landed. I diſembarked, to refreſh myſelf a little on the green and tranquil bank; but ſhort was my conſolation; for I ſuddenly beheld the ſhip in the midſt of the deep, and I remained dumb with aſtoniſhment at this new treachery. So great a crime was it to have pity upon me, that the ſailors, already repenting of having ſhewn it, had abandoned me as a fatal burden. Oppreſſed, yet not overcome, by my increaſing misfortunes, I proceeded through deep ditches and weedy marſhes, till I reached the cottage of an aged huſbandman, who recollecting my countenance, which he had often beheld in my triumphs, though then obſcured by the clouds

clouds of misfortune, was touched by my unworthy ſituation, and concealed me in a hollow place, covering me with flags and ruſhes. Thus Marius, at whoſe ſight the fierceſt nations fled with precipitation, remained trembling under that vile covering. But of what art thou not capable, O cruel Fortune! Soon the purſuers came up, and I heard them now diſputing with my kind hoſt, to make him diſcover where he had concealed the enemy of the Romans. O impious words, which I myſelf heard, buried in that ignominious retreat, and expired not with anger that I might ſurvive to revenge! Afterwards, more effectually to evade my purſuers, I immerged myſelf, naked, into the neighbouring marſh, ſo that my head only remained above, covered with the buſhes that grew there. But in vain; for being immediately diſcovered, like a wild beaſt led in triumph by the hunters, I was dragged naked to Minturnæ, and there delivered to the Prætor. Never did any intelligence awaken in me ſuch

aſtoniſhment and ſuch fury, as I felt when I was here informed that, by a decree of the Senate, I was to be condemned to death as an execrable wretch, by any judge whatever, and that every one had liberty violently to drag me to priſon. While the Prætor was paſſing the unjuſt ſentence, I in the mean time, ſhut up in a dark cell, was expecting the unworthy end of my glorious life. So great, however, is the ſplendour of exalted virtue, even in obſcure fortune, that there was no one in all Minturnæ who dared to become my executioner: only a Cimbrian ſlave offered himſelf, recollecting the blood of his countrymen which I had ſhed in torrents, and entered, reſolved upon revenge. In the dark air of that confined place I ſaw the flaſhing of his ſword, and though I was unarmed and caſt down, yet I exclaimed, with that voice formidable in the field, 'Dareſt thou then, O traitor, to ſlay Caius Marius!' At which exclamation, he, cowardly as he was cruel, threw down his ſword and fled,

trembling with apprehenſion. He then related, with barbarous ſuperſtition, that at that inſtant my eyes ſhone in the dark like fire, and that the ſound of my voice was ſupernatural and divine. Thus that compaſſion, which vile ſlavery had extinguiſhed in every heart, was awakened by ſo ridiculous a cauſe: for ſuch a prodigy, related by the idiot ſlave, was of more avail than my triumphs, and ſo alarmed the Judge, that fearing to draw upon himſelf the anger of the Gods, if he injured a man whom they favoured, he left me to my fate. I was then embarked on board a ſhip with proviſions and ſailors, who were to carry me wherever I thought proper to command them. In the mean time the citizens aſſembled on the ſhore, implored pardon of the Gods for ſending me away, conſtrained by cruel neceſſity not to harbour ſo dangerous a gueſt. I ſailed towards the oppoſite ſhores of Lybia, but the tyrant Fortune drove me back immediately to Sicily. Scarcely were my footſteps imprinted

printed on the ſand, when I was known and purſued. Again I took refuge on the ſea, and the wind tranſported me to Carthage. The reputation of my actions ought to have reſounded on thoſe ſhores; but the firſt words I heard there, were an order of the Prætor Sextilius, forbidding me to remain. To me, driven by continual miſfortunes, hunted from every ſhore, every land was become inhoſpitable, every ſea tempeſtuous, and I ſtood ſilently contemplating the ruins of the overthrown Carthage, as a mirror of fortune. I alſo, like them, was an example of her inconſtancy. This city, anciently ſo illuſtrious, then lay as a ſkeleton, the ſport of the winds: Marius ſat upon her ruins, contemned, wretched, and ſold. Words were inſufficient to expreſs thoſe great and terrible ideas, and a heavy ſilence oppreſſed my lips. I then advanced, breathleſs, along the burning ſand, where I unexpectedly met my ſon. He, having been a little before treacherouſly detained by the King of the Numidians,

had ſecretly eſcaped, and was ſeeking me with affectionate ſolicitude. Even to wild beaſts natural tenderneſs is a ſweet conſolation, greater in extreme miſery, immenſe when a happy meeting takes place beyond all expectation. But our joy was far from pure; it was rather mingled with bitter ſorrow. He ſaw a father, whoſe life till then was diſtinguiſhed and glorious, wandering, poor, without a country, without honour, without a ſhelter, without a grave; on the brink of which I acquired the company of one who would lament with me in vain, and to whom I ſhould leave the mournful inheritance of my misfortunes, and the hatred of the conſcript tyrants. Beſides, we both expected every moment to be ſeized by traitors, and to become mutual ſpectators of each other's ignominious death. But as, when the pilot is pale and trembling with the fear of inſtant ſhipwreck, the wind ſuddenly becomes propitious, ſo was I then relieved by an unhoped-for meſſage, that inconſtant Rome

Rome pitied my misery; she called upon me to face new and glorious dangers: always eager after them, and still more so in that abject situation, I yielded to the unexpected allurements of fortune. Arrived in Italy, I found there not only friends, but avengers; so that, having quickly collected an army, I entered these walls, and purified them, by a just severity, from your horrible ingratitude."

SECOND DIALOGUE.

Sylla and Brutus dispute concerning the manner in which both of them behaved towards their country, and then Cæsar draws a comparison between Clemency and Cruelty.

MARIUS ceased, but anger sparkled in his eyes. Cæsar, however, courteously replied: "Peace, O incensed Spirit! thou seest, perhaps here, innumerable souls expelled by thee, yet they all observe a respectful silence at thy threatening aspect. Ah! if thou canst not pity them, at least do not boast of those dreadful slaughters, by which, in such torrents of blood, thou appeasedst thy vengeance." Marius then seemed to moderate his cruelty, like a wild beast, that is caressed. He was already holding out his hand in a friendly manner to the Dictator, when a confusion of words arose in every part of those caverns, words

mingled

mingled with terror and aſtoniſhment. I then heard a low whiſper run through the crowd, of "Sylla, Sylla, Cornelius Sylla!" In the mean time a majeſtic Shade ſlowly advanced; the vulgar Shades, with an humble air, left a vaſt ſpace vacant as he came forward. He was dreſſed in the military ſagum, and the breaſt-plate ſhone on his broad cheſt. His eyes were blue, and diſdainful, his countenance haughty, his face covered with a red ſcurf. He ſtood in the midſt of the crowd, and turned around his cruel eyes; he held his chin elevated, clearly ſhewing his high opinion of himſelf, and his contempt for others. When Marius heard the ſound of that fatal name, he fled again, as he had done in life, ſuddenly diſappearing from my eyes. Cornelius fiercely ſmiled, and then, in a deep and ſlow voice began: "Who is there among you, mob of timid, inglorious Spectres, that will now preſume to do what you dared not when in life, call me to account for my government? You beheld me confiding only

only in the greatneſs of my ſoul, defended only by the glory of my actions, abdicate my Dictatorſhip in the Forum, diſmiſs my Lictors, who had cut off ſo many of your vile heads, and remain intrepid and unarmed, ready to give an account of every drop of blood. You were Romans; the opportunity, the time, were favourable to attack me; revenge was eaſy, in the power of every one; freſh were your wounds, Sylla vulnerable and mortal. Not one of you had then ſufficient breath within your trembling lips to diſpute with me." He ſaid, and then ceaſed, ſupporting his right hand on his ſide, and his left on the hilt of his formidable ſword. Then Marcus Brutus, haſtily advancing from the crowd, exclaimed: "Anſwer, ferocious Sylla, who gave thee power to exterminate a hundred thouſand Romans?" He, with grave ſeverity, ſaid, "Who art thou, that ſpeakeſt thus proudly?" "I am," anſwered he, "of the glorious race of Junius Brutus; like him, an enemy to tyrants; and, if I had lived when thou ſo

abusedst this wretched country, perhaps it would not have been unrevenged." Cornelius stood in silent thought, then fixed his eyes upon him, and said, "But in what manner?" The other quickly replied, "In every manner in which a good citizen combats the oppressors of his country." "But," insisted Sylla, "what wouldst thou have said, when, resigning my tremendous power, I submitted my head to the resentment of the people, without other defence than myself?" Brutus answered, "What I demanded of you just now; by what right you slew a hundred thousand Romans?" "By that right," answered Sylla, "which excellent men possess, of punishing destructive vices. To save an expiring country every remedy was just, when necessary. I however did not break through the civil institutions, since I was freely elected Dictator. But to what purpose is it to speak of legal proceedings, when it is manifest, that in Rome, long convulsed by the rashness of the Tribunes,

no

no one any longer knew where or what was the country, who was a citizen, nor were any traces left of its ancient virtue. Thofe who are hardened in wickednefs, cannot be corrected but by feverity, and I was therefore obliged to make ufe of it towards an infinite multitude of infamous wretches. If I had lived when virtue was ufeful and refpected, you would have been made fenfible, in a very different manner, of the greatnefs of my foul, of which my firft actions are a proof; for when I entered, dreaded, into this Rome, I kept my victorious troops under fuch ftrict difcipline that your lives and properties were untouched. I then endeavoured to extirpate corruption by ordinary and gentle meafures; but the univerfal treachery foon undeceived me, and made me have recourfe to the fword: I made fuch a ufe of it as was fuitable to the extremity of the evil; and when my wearied hand returned it to the fcabbard, I did not fear to fubmit myfelf to

your opinion: a tacit admiration has always acquitted me."

Then Marius vehemently exclaimed: "Unheard-of boldneſs is this, to call your country guilty, and yourſelf an excellent reformer of it. A ſingle citizen, ſuch as thou waſt, was ſufficient to corrupt any well-regulated city, and to reduce it in a ſhort time to miſery and ſlavery. We certainly deſerved your inſults, and your axes, ſince we endured the one, and tamely offered our necks to the other. All human reaſon muſt have been loſt among us when power was given to thee to ſell our lives; thy former wickedneſs lives immortal in thee, ſince thou dareſt ſtill to boaſt of what thou ſhouldſt abhor. To ſuch a degree does tyranny extinguiſh all reaſon, that the oppreſſor, like an hungry tiger, licks the blood remaining on his lips after devouring his prey, and the oppreſſed either no longer perceive the eternal light of juſtice,

or fear to look upon it. But if on the day that, trufting to the general cowardice, thou layedft down thy bloody office, any one had rifen in the Forum, and defired thee to account for his father flain, his property ufurped, it would have been known with what boldnefs thou wouldft have defended thy innumerable cruelties; for to condemn a man to death in ordinary forms of judgment, and by univerfally eftablifhed laws, is a matter deferving ferious deliberation, and in which every good mind is wont to hefitate. Thou joyfully refolvedft the flaughter of fo many without other law than thy cruel foul. The fword of juftice ought to tremble at fhedding even a drop of blood; and thinkeft thou that thou art not ftained by that which thou haft fhed in torrents? Go, proud and ferocious Shade! thou talkeft not here, in the Forum, to a vile and depraved populace, but to a citizen who flew the tyrant, and afterwards killed himfelf that he might not live in flavery." Cornelius coolly and flowly

 anfwered,

anſwered, his countenance at the ſame expreſſive of bitter irony: "Magnificent in truth are thy words, O Spectre, I know not whether bold or inſolent; ill, however, doſt thou boaſt of having deſtroyed the tyrant, if thou wert afterwards conſtrained to deſcend with him here below. And who was he?" Brutus, then, with his right hand pointing to Cæſar, ſaid, "Behold him! I killed him, and he was much better than thee." Sylla, turning towards him, immediately recollected him, and ſaid, "O Brutus, ſee how neceſſary was my ſeverity, and how pernicious all clemency. I condemned him in the proſcription, but was ſo wearied by continual petitions in his favour, that I revoked his ſentence. I, however, foretold to the Romans, that they preſerved him to their own deſtruction, for that in him was united the wickedneſs of many Marius's." Brutus ſeverely went on—"Truly aſtoniſhing is it, that after having, as it were, mowed down with thy tremendous ſcythe, innumerable citizens,

citizens, amongst whom the country might have hoped for an avenger, thou shouldst have preserved that one alone who was destined to oppress it. The only time that thou wast merciful was of infinite disadvantage to us; but such is the nature of the worst things, that they can never effect any thing good." Cæsar, somewhat grieved at these words, called out to Brutus, "Peace now." He was silent, and Cæsar, turning towards Sylla, continued: "O thou insatiable of blood, the cruel author of proscriptions, thy government, like a fatal effect of celestial anger, was distinguished by terror and death; mine was acquired by magnanimous valour, and supported by clemency. Thou wast delighted with the pale countenances of the Romans trembling at thy fatal presence; I was pleased to see them impressed with open confidence, and joyful boldness. No one would have touched thy exterminating hand. But this of mine, innocent of proscriptions and treachery, dreadful only to the

the enemies of Rome, was held out by me with kindneſs and friendſhip to the Romans, and taken by them with pleaſure." Sylla, with a ferocious ſmile, anſwered: "Ill doſt thou commend thyſelf for having uſed effeminate clemency towards wicked men, who ſtill boaſt of having betrayed thee: more reaſon have I to be ſatisfied with my ſeverity, which rendered me ſecure, and mankind obedient to me. Thou thoughteſt proper to be kind to traitors, and thou madeſt an unhappy experiment: I followed a contrary line of conduct, and the event proved which was the moſt eligible. Go, ſhort-ſighted man, do not pretend to teach Sylla how theſe are to be governed, for they obeyed and admired me, who was bathed in their blood, and plunged thee in thine own."

Thus ſaying, he caſt around his ferocious eyes, and then, with a threatening voice, exclaimed: "Whoever preſumes to blame my dictatorſhip, let him ſpeak; I attend

attend to him, ready to defend it." All were ſilent, as a crowd terrified at the roaring of the thunder: he ſtood with majeſtic fierceneſs, waiting to ſee if any one would dare to break the timid ſilence; and when no one ſpoke, he looked at Brutus with a bitter ſmile, and diſappeared through the dark air. Then a Shade, railing at him as he retired, ſaid, "Thou ſpeakeſt as becomes the heir of a courtezan." The ſurrounding multitude ſmiled at this remark. When I heard it, I recollected that Sylla had in fact been left her heir by the rich Nicopolis, a woman to whom that reproachful appellation was juſtly applicable. Then many, whiſpering, related how Sylla had ordained by his will that his body ſhould be burned upon the pile, though it was the cuſtom of his anceſtors to preſerve their dead with ſpices, becauſe he feared leſt his odious limbs ſhould be abuſed by the fury of the people. Thus ſcarcely did the tremendous Sylla diſappear, when ſeveral different converſations began, many Shades

Shades manifesting those thoughts which a little before they had restrained within their breasts; which made me silently reflect to what a degree a despotism, in whose measures there appears a sublime and dazzling splendour, debases those who are subject to it, since these still remained impressed with fear after so many ages. That populace, dumb and terrified at the aspect of Sylla, now gave vent in abuse to their foolish revenge. Thus the birds are silent among the branches while the devouring falcon hovers over them, but scarcely does he disappear, when immediately, joyful and courageous, sweetly warbling their various strains, they again animate the grove. The more illustrious Shades, however, stood, as at first, in mournful silence, having forborne to speak for no other reason than an aversion from conversing with a reviler of all virtue.

THIRD DIALOGUE.

Severe and bold Remarks of a Spirit, which, when living among the Romans, never expreſſed any diſapprobation of the injuſtice of their enterpriſes.

WHILE the crowd were diſputing, it ſeemed as if I heard the murmuring of running waters in the ſilence of the night. But the diſcourſe was ſuſpended, and all eyes attracted by the approach of a Shade, who advanced with a ſerene countenance; towards which, Cæſar and Cicero, Brutus and Antony, all ran immediately, all ſtretching out their arms to it, and all appearing to feel the ſame pleaſure at ſeeing it. Its countenance expreſſed venerable ſweetneſs, and a mild integrity of manners. Its temples were bald, its hair grey, its eyes ſoft, its forehead calm, its lips ſmiling. Then, with an air of affection tempered by courteous gravity, it embraced the ſurrounding

rounding Shades, kindly addreſſing each by his name. After theſe firſt expreſſions of regard were over, they remained for ſome time in that kind of ſilence which precedes an intereſting converſation; and then Brutus began: "Thy private life was certainly innocent, ſpent happily in agreeable purſuits, and in the cultivation of the Muſes in tranquil retirement; in which, however, thou waſt uſeful to many by kind offices and generous liberality. Hence, beloved by all, and unſuſpected by every faction, thou waſt able, in ſuch unjuſt times, to enjoy a long and irreproachable life. But I am grieved, that ſuch a pilot as thou wouldſt have been in the civil tempeſts, inſtead of conducting us in our adverſe ſituation, ſhould have remained tranquil in the port, thence beholding the country overwhelmed in the ſea of its corruptions." Theſe free and authoritative remarks ſeemed diſpleaſing to the multitude; for ſome made ſigns to Brutus not to proceed with them: but the Spectre to whom they

were

were directed, thus calmly replied:—"Had I been able to hope, that by attempting any generous enterprise I might be useful to my country, thou wouldst have beheld me launch out into the tempestuous sea of its vicissitudes; but the same opinion which I had conceived of the inevitable destiny of Rome, was entertained, twelve lustra before my death, by those excellent Patricians, Rutilius and Cotta, who, being unable either to endure the city or to correct it, forsook it, and went into voluntary exile. Thou thyself, Marcus Tullius, the glory of our eloquence, the treasure of philosophy, persecuted by triumphant vice, forsaken by the good, unprotected by thy hated virtues, wast constrained to seek thy safety in an exile bitter to thyself, and disgraceful to thy country. Being afterwards returned to it, thou livedst in continual perplexity, seeking, but in vain, to discover some means of reforming it; which fruitless meditations were afterwards concluded in thy mind, when thou sawest the overthrow of Pompey:

for thou then openly declaredſt thy opinion, that it was proper, not only to lay aſide, but to break the ſword; which being once heard by Pompey's own ſon, he drew his ſword, and would have killed thee, had not Cato, who was preſent at the diſpute, prevented him. No one, however, O Brutus, has leſs reaſon to contradict my opinion than thyſelf, who adminiſtered to Rome, in her deſperate ſituation, the laſt, but ineffectual remedy." "You arrived," inrupted Cicero, "at the ſummit of fame by different roads: one exhibited to the eyes of all, a wonderful example of pure manners, in an age fatal to every virtue; when the impetuous ferocity of ambition led the greater part to overthrow the laws of their country, he ſtood tranquil, like the ſummit of a mountain, whither the clouds never reach. The other, animated by a noble deſign, hoped to extirpate, by the death of one, the wickedneſs which was inveterate and common to all."—"Whoever," added Brutus, "deſpairs of the public ſafety, and

gives

gives it up as loſt, ſets as bad an example as he who quits the ranks in the field of battle. A true citizen lives not longer than his country, for he cannot ſurvive the grief of having loſt it. Beſides, to give it up as deſperate, is judging in a manner repugnant to the uſual probability of human affairs; which, though, often various in their nature, yet conſtantly teach us, that if ſometimes the moſt pleaſing hopes are deluded, on the other hand, apprehended misfortunes, and ruin which ſeemed inevitable, does not always take place. I therefore did not ſtand upon the ſhore looking at the ſtorms of Rome, but launched into the midſt of them, and was ſhipwrecked with her." Then that placid Shade replied to him: "If changes in States were to be obtained, without producing future calamities, equal to, or greater than thoſe which occaſion the preſent inconvenience, I ſhould not have neglected to engage myſelf in political concerns. Not a drop of blood was ſhed on my account, which thou cauſedſt

 to

to flow in torrents, in vain. My example certainly was not dangerous, and indeed imitated by few: thine awakened in the hearts of tyrants, the fear of treachery, the bitter source of all their cruelties."

While they were thus arguing, I, stimulated by curiosity, approached Tullius, who was listening with attention. In order to make him turn towards me, I advanced my hand to his toga, and endeavoured, forgetting the place where I was, gently to pull a small fold of it; but I took hold of nothing, and therefore supplied the defect of that useless sign, by asking, "Who is that?" He answered: "Pomponius Atticus." And I joyfully added: "We read thy letters to him, still warm with thy honest affection for thy unfortunate country, and full of lofty and noble ideas. In these, as by the masterly pencil of a distinguished painter, are so well depicted the innumerable vices, and the few virtues of thy times, that the mind is wholly carried back

to

to them, as we read them. We, living ſo long after you, are enabled, by the help of ſuch a guide, to converſe with ſome propriety of your affairs, even to yourſelves." Tullius was delighted to hear me ſpeak of thoſe volumes, and already appeared inclined to converſe about them, as a ſubject particularly agreeable to him; when he was interrupted by a new commotion among the Shades, who were agitated like the foreſt by the wind. He extended, in the mean time, his right hand towards my breaſt, and with his left kept off the thronging Spectres. And lo, a confuſed buzzing of voices was heard to murmur through the deepeſt receſſes of the cavern. The concourſe of Spectres then increaſed more than before, in a thick and tumultuous crowd: an awful, and at the ſame time an aſtoniſhing ſpectacle, to behold them agitated like waves, beneath the foundations of their auguſt country! But as the ſtorm furiouſly rends the fir-trees on the lofty mountain, and, when its rage is ſpent, play-

 fully

fully wantons among the flowers in the valley—so this confusion being shortly calmed, the Shades became tranquil, and a soothing silence was diffused through the air. I then saw five Shades advance with slow steps. They turned towards the crowd their martial countenances. Their steady eyes, their intrepid aspect, were expressive of greatness of mind, not of vain presumption. The most advanced was the Spectre already seen, the preceding night, of Scipio Emilianus, the destroyer of Carthage, called, from this circumstance, the younger Africanus. I thence conjectured that the four Shades who followed him, belonged to that illustrious family. But Cicero, who already perceived my anxiety, anticipating my questions, rested his left hand upon my shoulder, and pointing with his right, said to me: "Thou seest those two who walk before; they are the brothers Cneius and Publius Scipio, distinguished in arms, and who fell in the distant plains of Iberia; by their formidable exploits,

ploits, the Roman name was extended to the extreme ſhores of the Weſtern Ocean. They are followed by another pair of brothers, who alone could repair the loſs ariſing from the untimely death of the firſt: one is Lucius Cornelius, who triumphed over Antiochus the Great, King of Syria, and was on that account ſurnamed Aſiaticus; the other is Publius Cornelius, who defeated Hannibal at the battle of Zama, whence Africa for ever after heard with terror the ſound of his name, and he acquired the title of the elder Africanus. A great tribute of admiration is this, to obtain, by univerſal conſent, ſuch illuſtrious denominations, which portioned out the world to that family, as a patrimony due to their ſtupendous virtues. They are both ſons to that Publius who precedes them. See what pleaſure he takes in being the father of ſo gallant a pair!" Tullius ſaid this, becauſe juſt then, the father, turning round, with a joyful countenance, fixed his majeſtic eyes

upon

upon them, and ſeemed to deſire the multitude to ſhew their reſpect for them. I remained with my eyes immoveable; and Tullius, as well as myſelf, refrained from ſpeaking, looking attentively on theſe countenances. I aſked him, which was the elder Africanus; and he anſwered, "The one upon the right, whoſe forehead is bald, on which thou mayſt eaſily perceive a martial ſcar, in which he uſed to pride himſelf when in life." I fixed my eyes on that glorious mark, which we ſee alſo in the medals of him, and I perceived that the Shade bore a perfect reſemblance to them. While we were talking, they reached the tombs, and leaned upon them in a majeſtic attitude; then they fixed their eyes, that deſpiſed death, on the ſurrounding Shades, with a dignified ſilence. Emilianus, however, reſted on a tomb, with a mournful air, ſtill inconſolable for the treachery of his laſt night. But amidſt a crowd of other thoughts, this alſo occurred to me; how Tullius, born many years after the death

of

of the Scipios, could be ſo well acquainted with their features: which doubt having diſcloſed to him, he anſwered: "Not only Rome, but Italy, and even all the provinces of our Empire, were made familiar, either by marble buſts or by painted repreſentations, with thoſe venerable countenances. Theſe monuments were to be ſeen in the houſes, the Forum, the Temples, the Mauſoleums; grateful teſtimonies to their virtue, and a perpetual ſtimulus to ours. Wretched ſurely ſhould we have been, if our living afterwards, prevented us from being acquainted with thoſe features! Wherever the images of illuſtrious men are not kept with tears and with honour, virtue certainly can give no delight to the heart, nor admiration to the mind."

Theſe words Cicero addreſſed to me, and I hung on his divine lips; when, behold, Pomponius coming up to him, thus modeſtly ſaid to him: "See how illuſtrious

wickedneſs,

wickedneſs uſurps, even here below, the praiſe which is due only to virtuous actions. Theſe, whoſe bloody enterpriſes filled the abyſſes of the dead, ſtill reverenced here, are regarded by the crowd with timid aſtoniſhment. We, who ſought honourable reputation by irreproachable manners, and uſeful learning, we, continually anxious to perform the duties of men, neverthleſs, from the moment theſe appeared, remain here neglected." Tullius, ſomewhat vexed, replied: "Alas, Pomponius! have the ſoft delights of Athenian manners, and the pleaſing tranquility of the Muſes, weakened the Roman virtue in thee, that thou talkeſt of theſe in ſo contemptuous a manner?" And he mildly anſwered: "Now that, together with our bodies, we have laid aſide our human opinions, we ought to converſe with our minds unprejudiced. If, when we were wandering in the illuſions of mortal life, we dared to exalt our thoughts to the contemplation of truth, ſhall we now, that we are delivered from

from human darkneſs, forbear to expatiate on its delicious light?" "I," returned Cicero, "continually look on it, and am inſatiable in the enjoyment of it; but its leading doctrine is, that love for our country is the ſpring of virtue, and of the moſt glorious enterpriſes; on which account it grieves me to perceive that thou art of a contrary opinion." "To give," ſaid the other, "the tribute of affection to a country worthy of ſuch a ſentiment, is eaſy, and indeed a duty. To love a barbarous, atrocious, corrupt, incorrigible country, would be madneſs: yet to hate it, is criminal; to pity it, in vain. Hence, to know it, becomes a wiſe man." Tullius, as it were, out of breath, interrupted—"But whither tend, O mind, formerly among us ſo gentle, thy now ſo ſevere and angry obſervations?" "To ſhew thee," ſaid he, "what Rome really was, not viewed by the bloody ſplendor of her glory, not exalted by the all-powerful voice of fame, but judged by a mind no longer ſubjected

to the yoke of opinion. Thou feeſt an aſylum for criminals give it a beginning; then the fratricide, afterwards the rape of the Sabines. I paſs over the wars with Veii, with Fidenæ, with the Æqui, with the Volſci, and with all the ſurrounding people, undertaken under various pretexts, and as ſucceſsful as unjuſt. But after the cruel Tullius Hoſtilius had deſtroyed the city of Alba, the mother of Rome, and afterwards turned his arms againſt Latium, from no better motive than inordinate ambition, there remained to his poſterity perpetual ground for inſatiable vengeance; for the Roman Empire, already diſcloſing without ſhame its innate propenſity, not only the neighbouring States, but all Italy, roſe up againſt it. Hence, if at firſt it ran violently into glaring injuſtice, it was afterwards conſtrained to it by the neceſſity of fortune. When we conſider therefore impartially the wars of our kings, they appear only like a ſcourge of divine anger, with which theſe countries

were

were continually afflicted. When afterwards they were expelled, their usurping pride remained as a fatal inheritance to the Republic, which, like an overwhelming ocean that passes the confines of universal order, extended her desolating violence, more and more greedy after new usurpations, in proportion as her appetite for them was indulged. Not satisfied with taking away by force, which at least is a noble kind of wickedness, she usurped with abominable treachery. All of you must perceive that I speak of that judgment, worthy of perpetual ignominy, given by the Roman people, when the Aricini and the Ardeates referred to their arbitration a controversy concerning some lands in the neighbourhood, that they might decide to which of them they of right belonged; for the sentence was, that they belonged to none but the Roman people, who, hardened in villainy, immediately took possession. About the same time it happened that war broke out between the Cam-

panians and the Samnites; and although the latter were, by ſolemn alliances, the friends of Rome, ſhe, notwithſtanding, guided in all things by the dictates of her ambition, turned her arms againſt them, becauſe hired by the Campanians to this unjuſt action on more profitable conditions. But afterwards Rome, equally faithleſs to the one and to the other, reduced both under her dominion. Then our formidable deſires extended themſelves to the remoteſt parts of Italy; and we navigated, contrary to treaties, in the Gulf of the Tarentines: wherefore this people, already inſtructed by the example of others, how fatal were the Roman ſtandards wherever they approached, requeſted the aſſiſtance of Pyrrhus. So adverſe was deſtiny to that great King of Epirus, in ſo good a cauſe, that, after noble ſtruggles, being at length overcome by it, he quitted Italy. His departure left the whole of it ſubject to us, towards the latter end of the fifth century of Rome. We learn from hiſtory,

hiſtory, that, before our eſtabliſhment, the greater part of the nations of Italy were warlike, flouriſhing, and happy. The moſt ancient country of Etruria was illuſtrious for its learning, and diſtinguiſhed for the poliſhed manners of its inhabitants: but, deſolated by our arms, it remained like a ſkeleton buried beneath ruins, over which our fame founded with triumphant pride. Capua, Tarentum, Rhegium, were illuſtrious Colonies of Greece, not only highly civiliſed, but poliſhed to a degree of effeminacy, celebrated for their public ſpectacles and their agreeable politeneſs. But the progreſs of the Roman victories overthrew the arts, peaceful enjoyments, and all mildneſs of manners, wherever they came, and left in their ſtead a ferocious contempt of all knowledge, but in the arts of ſlaughter and death.

Italy being now ſubdued, the greedy Senate began to look out for pretences to extend their power beyond it; and theſe

were not long wanting. Certain ſoldiers of fortune, called Mamertines, having been admitted into Meſſina as gueſts and friends, had afterwards taken poſſeſſion of it, plundered, and inundated it with blood, and then inſolently appropriated to themſelves the wives and the property of the citizens, whom they had either killed or expelled. Not ſatisfied with this barbarous treachery, they infeſted by their ravages the whole iſland. You well remember that the dominion of Sicily was at that time conteſted between the Carthaginians and the Syracuſans: they, however, united together to expel the wicked race of the Mamertines, who, unable to repel ſuch an attack, demanded aſſiſtance from you. You, with that readineſs with which only innocent perſons under oppreſſion ought to be aſſiſted, complied with the invitations of thoſe ruffians: thus, become the allies and accomplices of their wickedneſs, you clearly ſhewed to the world that your origin was ſimilar to theirs. It ſeemed, however, as if

if fortune favoured you in proportion to the injuſtice of your deſigns; for, in a war of twenty-two years, called the Firſt Carthaginian War, Sicily was reduced into a province of the Roman people. Scarcely was peace concluded with the Carthaginians, than, taking advantage of ſome diſturbances which had broken out in their iſland of Sardinia, we ſuddenly attacked it, and ſeized upon it with open treachery: we then turned our enſigns, breathing blood and ruin, towards Greece, beginning to oppreſs it, under the ſpecious pretence of defending it againſt the powerful arms of the Macedonian Kings. Theſe Monarchs were continually ſtriving to ſubject that poliſhed and ingenious Nation to the ſevere ſceptre of their tyranny—an exterminating ſceptre, the fatal inheritance of that Alexander who, for the boundleſs effects of his madneſs, was ſtyled the Great. But it was ſoon ſeen how little the weak can confide in the protection of the ſtrong: for the Romans, inſidious defenders, inter-

fering in all the affairs of Greece, at length governed it with abſolute power. If it afterwards attempted to reſiſt the decrees of our Senate, it was treated as rebellious, and deſolated by our arms. We ſaw the beautiful and magnificent Athens, wonderful for its divine works of art, and celebrated for the celeſtial geniuses who flouriſhed in it, twice ſacked, and partly burned and deſtroyed, firſt by Sylla, and afterwards by Celenus, the Lieutenant of Cæſar the Dictator. The ſame year in which Carthage was overthrown, the unfortunate object of our emulation, we deſolated with fire and deſtruction the illuſtrious Corinth, with whom fell all the pride of Greece, which remained ever after abject and obſcure. If we ſubdued Greece, pretending to ſupport it, we made uſe of no artifice when we afterwards attacked Macedonia: nor were we ſatisfied till we dragged in triumph the unhappy Perſeus, its laſt King, at the proud chariot of Paulus Emilius. Behold us then violate the liberty entruſted

to our care, rend the diadem from the brows of Kings, break their ſceptres, and tear their purple, not to deliver the world from tyranny, but that we alone, fortunate, illuſtrious, and formidable, might exerciſe it ourſelves; and all other nations, oppreſſed and humbled, be reduced to regard in ſilence our incredible inſolence. Nor are theſe accuſations of mine mere aſſertions ariſing from ſpleen; but others, ſtill more ſevere, might be juſtified by your bloody and impious enterpriſes: for ſcarcely had Emilius ſent into Italy the rich ſpoils of the captive Monarch, when he received an order from the Senate to ſubdue all the cities of Epirus who had followed the fortunes of the King. Emilius then, concealing the atrocious decree with more atrocious diſſimulation, entered Epirus, putting on an appearance of moderation, as if he were diſpoſed to give that province its liberty. He then ordered, that on a certain day all the gold and ſilver, in the houſes and in the temples, ſhould be produced in

public

public in every city; and in the mean time he took poſſeſſion of the ſtreets with his legions: and when he had been obeyed to the full extent of his demands, a ſignal being ſuddenly given, the ſoldiers, already acquainted with the treachery of their chief, fell upon the remaining property of the betrayed citizens, whom they plundered with rapacious joy, as a glorious reward granted them by the Conſcript Fathers for the illuſtrious oppreſſion of Macedonia. Not leſs than ſeventy cities were ſo ravaged, that they diſappeared from the face of the earth on that execrable day: there remained only the ruins ſcattered over the deſolate fields, the hateful marks of the ſplendid fury of the Romans. A hundred and fifty thouſand citizens were led to ſigh in ſlavery, the followers or ſpectators of the proud triumph: the others wandered, diſperſed, among the ruins of their country, exiles, poor, wretched, objects of pity to all mankind except ourſelves. As the drunkard is not ſatiated by drinking, but, ſtaggering,

ſtaggering, lifts with trembling hand the full cup to his impatient lips, ſo we, more eager after wickedneſs the more we were plunged in it, ſuddenly drew our ſwords, reeking with the yet warm blood, againſt the effeminate Aſia, and took occaſion to attack Antiochus the Great. His rich and immenſe dominions remained at length a deſolate province of the Roman Empire. In which career of ſucceſsful villainy, we always retained our cruel hatred to Carthage, placed as it were by deſtiny in our ſight, on the oppoſite ſhore, as a mark for ſanguinary glory. Then, reputing ourſelves happy, becauſe that powerful rival preſented us a vaſt field for illuſtrious oppreſſion, we excited in Lybia, in Iberia, in Luſitania, a warlike conflagration, whoſe flames ſerved to illuminate our bloody triumphs. But of theſe the chief inſtruments were thoſe Scipios who, even here, ſeem to take pride in ſo many crimes. See how the multitude, with blind admiration, contemplate in humble ſilence their proud and ferocious countenances!"

FOURTH DIALOGUE.

Cæſar defends the Romans, and Pomponius confirms his aſſertions of their wickedneſs, particularly in the inſtance of the Scipios.

WHILE Pomponius was ſpeaking, Cæſar liſtened to him attentively, frequently, however, turning his eyes towards the Scipios: but at theſe words he threw with his right hand the lap of his toga over his left ſhoulder, and, ſomewhat angrily, interrupted:—" What would become of a city governed by ſuch a pacific genius as thine?" Pomponius calmly replied: " It would be oppreſſed with injuſtice, or happy without iniquity." Cæſar, half ſmiling, added: " If any city could be founded in a place inacceſſible to the inſults of other nations, this mild philoſophy of thine would be certainly not only pleaſing to hear, but uſeful, and deſired by all in daily practice: but

but ſince new cities ariſe in the midſt of the ancient ones, and all nations whatever, be they free or be they in ſlavery, are hurried, by a fatal impetuoſity, to uſurpation, this peaceful proſperity which thou extolleſt cannot be hoped for by any one who contemplates in hiſtory the viciſſitudes of human affairs, and afterwards judges of them according to the dictates of probability. Rome aroſe, it is true, from humble beginnings, but not by uſurping the property of others; for the country was a deſert when Romulus collected together our forefathers. Certainly it was a laudable undertaking, to convert a deſolate ſpot into the flouriſhing abode of a valiant people; nor needeſt thou to lament that he aſſembled outcaſts and adventurers, or, if you will have it ſo, criminals; for by this means he relieved Italy from a pernicious burden. Like untamed herds, they were, by ſuch a ſhepherd, brought under the yoke of moderate command; and thoſe indocile minds were, by ſuch diſcipline, at

length

length made acquainted with the authority of reafon, till that time held by them in contempt. And grieve not, as if it were a prodigious indignity, that men, feparated from the fofter fex, fhould endeavour to procure, at any rate, the neceffary comforts of marriage; for, before the fo-much-deplored feizure of the difconfolate virgins, the Romans had already, many times, and with fupplicating entreaties, requefted their neighbours to give them their daughters for wives upon honourable terms: but their difdainful and bitter refufal at length conftrained our people to the meafure, now blamed by thee in fo forrowful a manner. The virgins, however, were lefs afflicted at their misfortunes than thou, and very eafily forgave us for it. Thou knoweft the manner in which, lovely and dishevelled, they darted between the fquadrons, on the point of engaging, and, by their foothing words and their tears, extinguifhed the cruel flames of anger. Not a truce, not a peace, not an alliance, but an union of empire,

empire, between us and the implacable Sabines, was the aſtoniſhing effect of that ſweet interpoſition. Then, the reign of Numa, laſting more than eight luſtra, without wars, without conſpiracies, not dreaded, but revered, appears an image of celeſtial benignity, rather than human government. No other nation can boaſt of having maintained ſo inoffenſive, ſo mild, and ſo juſt an empire, amidſt reſentful and warlike neighbours, who were reſtrained only by ſacred admiration of ſuch virtue. And if, afterwards, our anceſtors had continually in their hands the reeking ſword, this did not ariſe ſo much from a reſtleſs deſire to throw the world into confuſion, as from abſolute neceſſity: for all the nations of Italy, ſome through fear, ſome through envy, roſe up, anxious to oppreſs the infant Rome. She, after firſt revenging her injuries, and defending her rude habitations on Mount Palatine, and her ſcanty crops on the banks of the Tiber, was ſo fortunate as to reduce her aſſailants, not only to yield

their arms to her, but to uſe them for the future in her defence. It was a particular and moſt wiſe plan of our country, not to keep the conquered nations of Italy under the yoke of ſlavery, but to receive them into her boſom, like the other citizens. From juſt defence, however, aroſe the unexpected neceſſity of preventing impeding injuries; whence our victories were extended into diſtant countries, where, from the inevitable imperfection of every thing human, our triumphs were ſometimes mingled with crimes. But no war, however juſt or neceſſary, can be long continued, without ſome exceſs of vengeance. For my part, I am aſtoniſhed that a mind like thine, acquainted with univerſal hiſtory, ſhould imagine that the cruel art of blood and death could be tempered, like the affairs of civil life, by the reſtraints of moderation. Rome, however, in her continual and extenſive warlike undertakings, diſplayed, more than any other nation, a heroiſm of conduct, a generous pride and

virtue,

virtue, unheard of before, in the midst of that ferocious licentiousness. Our fidelity to our oaths and agreements was so sacred among all nations, that no one ever distrusted a Roman promise: but, if it pleases thee to display, with all the arts of eloquence, before the minds of those here present, some wicked actions, instead of forgetting them, thou shouldst also recollect some of those innumerable ones of ours, whose splendour filled the world with astonishment. It yet, I hope, preserves the memory of our generosity to Falerii, when a schoolmaster treacherously delivered to us the principal youths of that city, who were entrusted to his care: but our magnanimous Camillus refused, with anger, so advantageous a treachery, and sent back, free, those valuable hostages. Nor do I imagine that time has yet buried in oblivion the name of Fabricius, who, when at war with Pyrrhus, informed him that his physician had offered to poison him. Were I to attempt, O Romans, to enumerate all

the Roman virtues, I ſhould diſturb, more than is proper, this ſilence of death, and only relate things well known to you, becauſe they are your own: I am therefore grieved at the preſent neceſſity of bringing them to the remembrance of ſuch a mind as this, if not valiant, yet accompliſhed, a knight and a Roman."

The Dictator pauſed; and the eyes of the five Spectres, ardent as burning coals, rolled, threatening, in their ſockets: an awful ſilence reſted on their lips; the air in theſe hollow retreats was at the ſame time huſhed, nor had any Shade the boldneſs to diſturb it in the preſence of thoſe Spirits, worthy, above all, of reſpect and veneration. If that crowd felt ſuch reverence, it is unneceſſary to aſk what was mine. He however who, from his remarkable mildneſs in life, I imagined would preſerve a reſpectful ſilence in the preſence of ſuch illuſtrious men, inſtead of that, intrepidly proceeded: "Since thou rouſeſt me,

me, O Dictator, by thy angry reproofs, to bring farther confirmation of our wickedness, I am determined to expose it, with a boldness equal to thy displeasure in hearing it. Ye too, shall hear it, O ye Scipios, of whom, when in life, I had no knowledge but from your portraits and your formidable enterprises; nor let any one be astonished, if such a man as I was in the world, living modestly in tranquil retirement, here express my sentiments with warmth: My disposition was not different, but I concealed it; I was silent, not from cowardice, but because I was convinced that all noble and liberal sentiments, like the stammering of an ideot, would be exposed to the contempt of such corruption; and if I passed a great part of my life at a distance from this unhappy country, it was not because I was unworthy to serve it, but because it appeared to me no longer deserving of noble and dangerous cares."

While he was talking he shook his head, as inflamed with anger, and his silver locks

floated on his ſhoulders; then he turned to the Scipios, and continued: "On you, the firſt pair of illuſtrious brothers, Cneius and Publius, who fell in the plains of Iberia, I ſhall paſs no cenſure, becauſe you died in battle, and none of your actions exceeded the uſual cruelty of war; but you left to your ſurviving deſcendants time, as well as fatal opportunities, for ſlaughter. I ſpeak of thee, the ſon of Publius, of thee, called the elder Africanus, who, at New Carthage in Iberia, celebrated, with cruel rites, the obſequies of thy father and thy uncle, who were there killed, as a fatal prognoſtication of future maſſacres. Then, at thy invitation, the cruel gladiators fought over thoſe graves, as if the earth which covered thy anceſtors thirſted for human blood. The barbarians of that country crowded to the atrocious ceremony, and fought to ſatisfy, in their blood, a kind of innate ferocious madneſs. What more? Two Princes, who were couſins, Orſua and Cerbis, who diſputed for the government of the city of

Ibis,

Ibis, decided their conteſt with the ſword, at thoſe tombs conſecrated to blood, and Orſua was ſlain there by his rival. Then thy ſtandards carried deſtruction wherever they were diſplayed. I ſee the wretched Aſtapa beſieged by thy fatal legions, becauſe it was a city faithful to the Carthaginians. She eſteemed it ſo great a misfortune to become the ſlave of the Scipios, that her citizens reſolved to periſh to a man, rather than ſubmit to it: they collected, therefore, their moſt valuable effects in the public ſquare, placed on the heap the women and the children, and then ſurrounded them with dry wood: fifty youths ſtood with their torches, ready to ſet fire to the fatal pile, when the cruel conqueror ſhould enter. In the mean time, the air reſounded with the mournful imprecations of that innocent multitude, againſt the perfidious cruelty of the Romans, who diſturbed the peace of the world. Then all the youth able to bear arms ſallied out againſt us, reſolved to conquer or periſh;

but Fortune, seconding our oppression, stretched them all lifeless on the plain. At this news, the few who remained in the city killed the women and the children, and threw their expiring bodies into the flames, which were almost extinguished by torrents of blood; and then, wearied with the miserable slaughter, they cast themselves into the fire which consumed their country. At this conjuncture the Romans arrived, and, eager to snatch from the flames the gold and silver which shone in them, some were scorched, others burnt up by the devouring fire, through their avidity for plunder; which instance of incredible cruelty was enough of itself to stain the reputation of thy family for ever; yet thou thoughtest fit, as a glorious action, to renew it in Italy, with the city of Locris. This city of great Greece had taken part with the Carthaginians, its ancient masters; but thou, to punish the necessary obedience of those citizens, dispatched thither thy Lieutenant Quintus Pleminius, already noted

noted for his infamous character, conformably to which, abusing the victory he obtained, he suffered the soldiers to tear the virgins from their fathers arms, the youth from the bosoms of their mothers, with impious licentiousness. Lamentations, death, violation, and fury, filled that city, desolated by his vengeance; which extreme cruelties, though not executed by thee, O inexorable commander, were, notwithstanding, thine, because approved by thy atrocious connivance."

Pomponius here suspended his discourse. Oh, astonishing! Scipio was silent: the lips of the others of his proud family were mute, their eye-brows bent down, their countenances thoughtful. But Pomponius, with still more animation, proceeded: "Now I address myself to thee, Scipio Emilianus, the destroyer of cities, and particularly of the unfortunate Carthage. Her citizens, already oppressed by fortune, came to thee as suppliants, ready to submit to any conditions;

ditions; but that rival of the Roman glory was to perifh. Such was the decree of the implacable Senate; that bulwark oppofed to our ambition was to be overthrown. And now behold thee, with little oppofition, and great cruelty, reduce to folitary ruins that vaft, ancient, and flourifhing city, who for feven centuries had extended over the ocean her dreaded empire. Thy own eyes beheld the wife of Hamilcar, at that time the head of that falling State, to avoid becoming thy flave, kill her children, throw them into the flames which were confuming the temple of Æfculapius, invoke, with dreadful imprecations, the vengeance of Heaven, and then caft herfelf into them. It is, however, reported, that when thou faweft that majeftic city vanifh from the eyes of men, fome tears fell from thy eyes, and fome fighs efcaped from thy ferocious breaft. I do not afk if that compaffion were real: I know that it refembled that of the executioner, who, with the head in his hand,

laments

laments having deprived the other members of life: I know that, purſuing thy courſe of deſolating glory, thou immediately deſtroyedſt all the cities of Africa in alliance with the Carthaginians: I know that, after that country had been reduced to a ſandy deſert, it was proudly denominated a Roman Province: I know, that to thee was given the title of the Younger Africanus, and Africa was conſigned to the Procunſuls, who, by their unreſtrained exactions, perpetuated in it the ſcourge of conqueſt.

But now Iberia, become the bloody theatre of the glory of the Scipios, called upon thee to imitate there the examples of thy family. The countenances of the mothers and wives, in thoſe ſorrowful countries, ſtill reeking with the blood of ſons and huſbands, turned pale with terror at the ſound of thy formidable name: and behold, thou beſiegeſt the valiant Numantia. Her generous citizens, illuſtrious for their contempt of death, in vain

vain provoked thy legions to fight on open ground; temporising, thou avoidedst the formidable and repeated invitations of those citizens, who feared nothing except slavery. Thou retainedst thy army in its intrenchments, and only by miserable famine opposedst that generous valour. The Numantines no longer seemed living men, but skeletons, but shadows. The anguish of hunger, O horrid to relate! led them secretly to deprive each other of their languishing lives, and to devour those limbs, already consumed by famine. Yet, in this dreadful extremity, rather than yield their swords, they turned them against each other, determined to perish with their country. In the mean time, they set fire to the city in every part; and, by its funereal splendour, sacrificed themselves to agonizing liberty. When the houses, and the furniture, and almost all the inhabitants, were thus destroyed by fire or the sword, the few who survived the calamitous destruction, went with tottering steps

to the gate, through the ſmoaking and deſerted ſtreets, and opened it to thee, leaving thee maſter of famiſhed ghoſts, in a ruined city. Yet even theſe didſt thou ſell like cattle, without pity for their miſfortunes, without reſpect for their generous perſeverance. O exterminator of innocent people! O tyrant of free men! art thou not he who immediately puniſhed the city of Lutia, becauſe, pitying the oppreſſion of Numantia, ſhe promiſed to aſſiſt her? And though that kind intention was not executed, yet thou commandedſt Lutia to give up to thee four hundred of her youths, whoſe hands thou cauſedſt to be cut off with ignominious vengeance. O barbarous actions, hateful to remember, dreadful to hear, and which notwithſtanding adorned thy name with the pompous title of Numantinus! If ſuch a cloud covered then our blind intellects, and ſuch baſeneſs made our timid hearts tremble; that we admired actions contrary to human reaſon, and manifeſtly vile, cruel, and wicked; I

am forry for it, and exhort you to be better in death, at leaft, than you were in life." At thefe words, Emilianus caft down his eyes, till then threatening, and covered his face with his right hand, as one ftung with remorfe for fome bad action. Then a few tears dropped upon his hairy breaft, upon which he reclined his chin, appearing to be oppreffed with the moft poignant forrow. The other Scipios, afhamed, turned their countenances afide, and concealed them with the laps of their togas. Then Pomponius exclaimed : "Ah! why are not thofe noble tears feen by the people now dwelling in Iberia, in Africa, and in Afia? countries, by your ferocious race, watered with far other tears of orphans, widows, and fathers in defpair! It would be at leaft a valuable confeffion, proper to fatisfy late pofterity, now perhaps, as well as your-felves, indignant at the infults endured by their anceftors."

FIFTH DIALOGUE.

Pomponius continues to blame the oppreſſion of the Iberians and Gauls. Cæſar accuſes theſe people of barbarous cuſtoms; and Pomponius inſiſts, that the Romans had others ſtill more barbarous.

POMPONIUS pauſed, and boldly waited for ſome one of them to anſwer him; but none offered to reply; he therefore went on: "This, however, is a ſign, that there were in your breaſts ſome ſparks of generous virtue, ſince the remembrance of your ancient faults awakens you at length to a ſenſe of compaſſion. Let no one, however, accuſe you of having been the only oppreſſors of thoſe countries; for one family, though born to ſlaughter, was inſufficient to execute all thoſe cruelties with which the Senate ſought to deſtroy theſe people. Thou knoweſt it well, O Emilianus Numantinus, who in thy youth ſervedſt in Iberia, under the Conſul L. Licinius Lu-

cullus, who was appointed to the government of that province. When he arrived there, peace had been concluded with the Celtiberians; yet, without any other motive than avidity for plunder, he attacked Cauca, a wealthy city of those people. Unprepared for resistance, it submitted upon honourable terms, and admitted the victorious legions. As soon as they were entered, the ferocious Lucullus, unveiling all his treachery, massacred full twenty thousand citizens; and the old men, women, and children, whose lives had been spared through contempt for their weakness, he sold for slaves. Thou knowest, that, not long before Numantia was destroyed by thee, it had made a solemn treaty, in the presence of the Roman army, with the Proconsul Q. Pompeius; but the Senate thinking fit, for their own advantage, to continue the war, disapproved the agreement. The Numantian Ambassadors came here in vain, for the public faith was of no avail to them. Nay, the Conscript Fathers, with infamous treachery,

treachery, were guilty of falſehood; and then Numantina was abandoned to thy tremendous anger. In imitation of theſe examples, Servius Sulpicius Galba, Prætor in Luſitania, then laid waſte that province with fire and ſword, ſtopped only by the weſtern ocean, to whoſe very ſhores he extended his inſatiable rapacity. The people, reduced to extremity, requeſted peace: the Prætor granted it, even pretending to pity thoſe among them who inhabited a barren country, and offering to remove them to one more fruitful. They, tempted by this kindneſs, were divided into three colonies, ready to transfer their habitations to the provinces deſigned for them. The Prætor, with flattering perſuaſions, induced them to form themſelves into three diſtinct bodies: then going to one of them, he began, with a mild air, to lament that they, being friends of the Roman people, and indeed, by means of the peace, having a common country with them, ſhould ſtill remain under arms: he

therefore entreated them to lay them down, as an invidious mark of unmerited diſtruſt; which inſidious language had ſuch an effect on their ſimple minds, that they were perſuaded by it. But when the arms were all collected, and ſecured in a place apart, the Prætor, eager to execute the treachery he had planned, ordered his ſoldiers to ſurround the unarmed multitude, and maſſacred the whole before his cruel eyes. Thoſe wretches invoked the vengeance of Heaven for the execrable treachery, while the Prætor beheld intrepidly the ſlaughter. Then, having acquired experience by this firſt perfidy, and exulting in this ſcene of blood, he deſtroyed, by the ſame arts, the other two colonies; murdering upwards of thirty thouſand betrayed wretches, like ſheep in the fold. A noble example of the Roman faith, of which we haughtily boaſt to have been ſuch rigid obſervers!

"Heaven, however, had preſerved an illuſtrious avenger of ſo many crimes. I

ſpeak

ſpeak of Viriatus, who, by incredible chance, eſcaped that maſſacre. Born a ſhepherd, but with an elevation of ſoul which rendered him worthy of a throne, he aſſembled thoſe oppreſſed people, and defended them ten years againſt our tyranny; during which time he humbled our pride by continual defeats. Nor was he at laſt conquered, but in a manner more diſgraceful even than theſe: for the Conſul Servilius Cæpio promiſed two meſſengers from Viriatus, who had come to treat of peace, to give them a great reward if they would aſſaſſinate him. Seduced by this wicked temptation, they murdered their General while ſleeping in his tent: they then returned to the Conſul, to demand their recompence. But though treachery is valued in reſpect to the advantage obtained by it, the traitors are always abominated. The Conſul, therefore, coldly replied: "He was incompetent to fix the reward which ſhould be given to ſoldiers who killed their General, but that it belonged

longed to the Senate to decide it. Thither, therefore, with new perfidy, he dispatched the traitors; leaving the world in doubt, which amongst so many treacheries was the most detestable. Thou seest, therefore, O Cæsar, of what little avail is the memory of the probity of Camillus in the affair of the schoolmaster of Falerii, or of Fabricius with Pyrrhus in danger of being poisoned! Why, dost thou not recollect the massacre of three hundred children of the Volsci, placed in our hands as hostages? The crimes of the Romans, like an impetuous torrent, bear down before them, and overwhelm a few good actions. These shine like the lightning in the night, whose transitory splendour serves only to make the succeeding darkness more terrible. But now the field was opened for thy illustrious slaughters in Gaul, the nations of which were continually harrassed by our legions. There also was spread the fame of the Roman perfidiousness. Already the Consul Domitius had induced Bituitus, King of the Auverni,

to

to come to his camp, to conclude a peace: but the credulous and gallant Monarch, kept as a prifoner, loaded with fetters, fent to Rome, and dragged in the pompous triumph, had opened the way for thy ufurpations. Many rich and valiant Nations did Gaul enclofe in her bofom, prior to them; after which, fubjected to the avidity of the proconfuls, it remained a poor wretched province, a fatal example of our ferocious rapacity." Cæfar, who till then had liftened in filence, at thefe words raifed his head, which he had before held down, plunged in thought. The laurel which crowned his bald temples had dropped a little upon his ftern brows: he, however, removed the leaves with his right hand, and touching it, faid: "Now, that thou difputeft with me the merit of this triumphal diftinction, it would be vile patience to endure any longer thy bold accufations. Thou now difcourfeft of me and of my actions, and takeft upon thyfelf to condemn them: and how is it, that fuch a man as thou waft, valued only for

for timid prudence, and for cautiously flying from the calamities of thy country—on terms of friendship, by means of the flattering pliability of thy manners, with men who were contending for empire—calm amidst storms, secure amidst disasters, unruffled amidst slaughter, untouched amidst crimes, so that never was cowardice more celebrated than thine—shouldst now, when the danger is past, talk with audacious boldness of us, and of the Roman virtues?" Pomponius, without anger, answered: "In life I feared nothing but to offend virtue; and as I judged it impossible not to violate its laws, amidst the civil discords, I retired to a distance from them; and if while we were immersed in the pitiable ignorance of corporeal life, our weak intellects were dazzled by useful crimes, behold now the veil of falsehood rent by the hand of death; truth displays itself before my mind with triumphant splendour; my thoughts no longer irresolutely waver in the delirium of human inconstancy; I

esteem

efteem the greater part of our enterprifes unjuft; I partook not of their guilt; the blood of my countrymen, though flowing in torrents, ftained not me. Who then, among you, reeking with that of exterminated nations, and even of your own fellow-citizens, fhall dare to blame me for my innocence? I paffed my life in a calm, but not in a mean manner, and I nobly defpifed it: for not waiting for enervating old-age, I defcended willingly into the tomb, by voluntary abftinence from food. Oh, how ferocious are your minds, in which fo many ages have not extinguifhed the fatal thirft for flaughter!"—Thus exclaiming, he ftruck his fides and his breaft with his hands, and his eyes feemed ready to gufh out with tears, which were fcarcely reftrained by manly fortitude. Cæfar then continued: "No war was ever more juft than that which we fo long maintained againft the Gauls, which having been begun by their injurious behaviour, was afterwards continued

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in our own neceſſary defence, and by a happy termination, ſubdued a cruel people, and envious of our greatneſs. They, not from any provocation, but with the rage of wild beaſts, roſe up to deſtroy Rome in her infancy, killed our defenceleſs and venerable conſcript fathers, and afterwards our meſſengers of peace, whoſe limbs they tore in pieces: but ſuch barbarous treachery was perfectly agreeable to the character of that nation, whoſe cuſtoms were equally deteſtable and cruel. They faſtened to their horſes the bleeding heads of their enemies ſlain in battle, as glorious ornaments; converted afterwards their ſkulls into drinking-cups, from which they intoxicated themſelves at their feaſts: nor were they leſs atrocious in their funeral rites, at which the ſlaves and clients deareſt to the deceaſed were ſacrificed at the pile, and thrown upon it to be burned with their dead maſters. A horrid divinity was that from which they pretended to be deſcended, namely, the God of the infernal regions,

regions; more horrid were the ſacrifices offered to him, human victims. The relentleſs Druids plunged the dagger in their heart, and holding their hand upon the hilt, predicted from its palpitations future events : but at their ſolemn feſtivals, they made coloſſal figures of wicker work, the vaſt and ſhapeleſs members of which, they with refined cruelty, filled with living men, mixed with wild beaſts ; they then ſet the maſs on fire, from which, amidſt clouds of ſmoke and the roaring of the flames, there iſſued human groans and the howling of wild beaſts, heard with devout minds by the ſuperſtitious multitude. Such was the nation whom I conquered in a neceſſary war, and induced them to forſake ſuch execrable cuſtoms. For what then doſt thou grieve, Atticus, except for what ought to give pleaſure to every Roman?"

He replied calmly: "Since thou declaimeſt ſo much againſt the cruelty of thoſe people, by our pride ſtigmatized as barbarians, let

us see if there be no room to apply the same accusations to ourselves. In no other nation was the parental authority so tyrannical as among us, which gave a father absolute power to abandon his children, to expose them in the woods, to dash them against the wall. When they were grown up, he could employ them in the most servile offices, sell them for slaves, kill them like cattle, and finally disinherit them, without assigning any reason. Tell me, what other nation had more cruel laws against debtors? Given up as slaves to their creditors, bound with chains, scourged with rods, they ploughed like oxen in those fields, drenched with the blood they had shed in war. In vain did those wretches show on their breasts the scars of glorious wounds, and on their shoulders the ignominious marks of servile stripes. If, after ninety days of ill-usage, they did not discharge their debt, it was in the power of the creditor, according to the atrocious law of the Twelve Tables, to kill his debtor; and if there

there were more creditors, they could divide the body among them. Hence, the houſes of our anceſtors were become priſons full of plebeians chained, and oppreſſed with infamous uſury. They were daily flattered with the pompous title of liberty, but had nothing free except tears and lamentations. And how expect compaſſion from thoſe who had reduced cruelty to a public art? Oh! the abominable ſpectacle of the gladiators, which was attended to with greater care, than the mild and liberal arts! The bodies deſtined for this barbarous purpoſe were delicately fed, that their limbs, expoſed naked in the combat, might be fair, plump, and beautiful, and the wounds they received more deep and viſible, exciting ſublime diſtreſs in the minds of the ſpectators. It was neceſſary to fall with grace, to agonize with compoſure, to expire in a noble attitude: the mad applauſes of the multitude, drowned the groans of the dying; and they were more pleaſed, as wounds and death were preſented to them

in uncommon circumſtances. Not only warlike men, contemners of death, but virgins, naturally inclined to pity, and timid children, were ſeated in the amphitheatre, and viewed the dreadful ſtrife of death with ferocious delight. Thus, even their amuſements were calculated for a people trained to oppreſs the univerſe: nor was any mode ſo likely to obtain their favour, as exhibiting to them ſcenes of blood. And therefore, O Dictator, when thou waſt Edile, in order to open a path to thy ambitious deſigns, thou gaveſt the people a ſhow of more than ſix hundred gladiators. What do I ſay? Even in the midſt of ſplendid entertainments, drinking Falernian wine, lying on ſoft down, ſurrounded by flattering courteſans and obſequious paraſites, it was a pleaſure to ſee, at a ſmall diſtance from the table, the reeking blood of the gladiator. Then, to the ſtill greater abaſement of human nature, men were ſet to combat with wild beaſts, who tearing their limbs in various ways,

ways, presented such an emulation in cruelty, that it was difficult to decide whether the men or the brutes were the more savage. These however, were the chief delights of the Roman populace; and therefore Sylla, desirous of gaining their favour, in order to rise to despotic power, during his prætorship gratified the common ferocity, by an exhibition of a hundred lions fighting with gladiators. But the abundance of our inhuman customs makes me pass over the following, though barbarous, namely, our cruelty to our prisoners; it was suitable, and indeed necessary to a people of tyrants: but this I will not omit, that slaves, and their posterity for ever, were valued by law, not as persons, but as effects, in which horrible regulation is contained a proposition equally inhuman and impious. Hence, it is not to be wondered at, if, with stripes and punishments, we discharged on these wretches our haughty anger. Where art thou, Vedius Pollio, who, in my time, which,

after cruel wars, brought on at length soft repose and milder manners, wast wont to kill thy slaves, and fatten thy lampreys with their bodies? What cannibal ever used such art in preparing his abominable feasts? Where art thou, Metellus, who, in the war with Jugurtha, having caused the deserters to be delivered up to thee, punishedst them as slaves, causing them to be buried up to the middle, and then surrounded by fire, in which they were suffocated and consumed? Behold a military discipline, fit only for a destroying people!

"In many and weighty affairs of the Republic, we were not guided by sound philosophy, or by wise laws, but by the flight of birds, the thunder rolling in the heavens, the palpitating entrails of oxen, the Sibylline books, obscure oracles, vain dreams, the still more vain divinations of the Aruspices and the Augurs, those crafty deceivers of the vulgar: even cruel minds were alarmed at bad omens. Marius met,

near

near the ruins of Carthage, two ſcorpions, who were fighting with obſtinacy: that conqueror of ſo many nations, become a credulous ignorant woman, from that omen, which he judged unlucky, fled trembling from Africa. The mercileſs, the haughty exterminator of our enemies and of us, the inexorable Sylla, was uſed to hang at his neck an image of Apollo, and fervently to pray to it in the dangers of battle. Thus, two tremendous competitors for thy empire, O Rome, at whoſe names mothers trembled, and wives turned pale, were rendered cowards by deſpicable ſuperſtition. It ſeems to me, however, that Marius, at the ſame time that he was credulous himſelf, alſo deceived the multitude; conſidering that he was always accompanied, in his formidable enterpriſes, by a Syrian woman, named Marta, who foretold future events; in which ſagacious artifice Sertorius was equally ſkilled, who, by means of the ſtag of Diana, maintained himſelf ſucceſsfully in Iberia; and, above all,

Numa,

Numa, inventor of a myſterious communication with his nymph. Yet, if any diſſimulation is to be approved, it was that which tamed a ſavage people. But never, O Dictator, in ſtriving to defend thyſelf, didſt thou touch ſo cloſely on arguments that make againſt thee, as in accuſing the Gauls of offering up human ſacrifices; ſuch were the veſtals buried alive. Nor moſt certainly doſt thou forget what all the Romans know, that after the firſt Carthaginian war, becauſe it was written in the Sibylline oracles, that the Greeks and the Gauls ſhould take poſſeſſion of Rome, the prieſts, to evade that prediction, cauſed a man and a woman of each nation to be buried alive. And afterwards, at the beginning of the ſecond Carthaginian war, the ſame barbarous ſacrifice was performed in the ox market, and was in like manner repeated in the next age. But to whom do I ſpeak? Didſt not thou thyſelf, O Dictator, cauſe that bloody ceremony to be performed at Rome? See how audacious

is tyranny, blaming in others the very crimes of which it is itſelf guilty! What exbition, in fine, more inſolent and more barbarous, than the triumph held among us in ſuch high eſtimation?"

SIXTH DIALOGUE.

Pomponius blames the triumphs, and then raises some doubts concerning Lucretia, which are confirmed by her silence.

AT this question the crowd were affected as if it contained some impiety. The Dictator, Brutus, Antony, and all the most illustrious Shades, surrounded Pomponius, and looked at him with displeasure. The wise Tullius heard, without anger, the free discourse of the ancient friend of his studies; he, however, declined his head a little towards his shoulder, and kept his eyes fixed with a mild air upon the ground. Atticus, far from being disturbed by those sudden murmurs, continued with still greater animation:—" In proportion to the mildness of my manners when in life, be the severity of my decision in death. I therefore repeat, without anger and without

out fear, that that ceremony was cruel and proud, in which the regal diadem, as if it were deteſtable, was outraged by the inſults of the vulgar. Yet our Lieutenants, Generals, and Conſuls, if they were ſometimes made priſoners by the enemy, were not expoſed to any ſuch humiliation. Ours, therefore, is the claim to ſuch a cruel invention. And who were we, that, tearing the royal purple, and treading crowns under foot, dared to call ourſelves the ſubduers of tyrants? We were the deſtroyers of brave and innocent nations, the inſatiable plunderers of rich countries; we dragged in chains through theſe ſtreets, kings of illuſtrious deſcent, great, warlike, and beloved by their people. They walked ſlowly along, with their eyes caſt down, amidſt the ſhouts of the vulgar; and their eyes, lately the ſeat of majeſty, overflowed with tears of anger. The ſorrowful wives, their children the hopes of ſubjugated nations, acompanied with ſighs the Monarch, now become the ſlave of the Roman pride.

His

His palace then was changed to a priſon, his ſceptre to fetters, his glory to diſgrace, his children to execrable malefactors. But perhaps, when we ſet our foot on the royal neck, we delivered the people from ſome cruel tyranny, to give them freedom and happineſs? On the contrary, the conquered nations deplored the unworthy fate of their Monarchs. Nor did our Proconſuls moſt certainly conſole them for that misfortune: for as, in conquering them, we had been thirſty after blood, ſo, in governing them, we were inſatiable of gold. This was the fate of Sicily, of Africa, of Greece, of Iberia, of Gaul, and all the other countries which we deſolated, which, after they had loſt their Princes, were ſubjected to the exactions of Roman Patricians, differing from them in language, in diſpoſitions, in manners, whoſe greateſt deſire was ſpeedily to enrich themſelves. Even in Rome, we ourſelves, now ſlaves, now tyrants, were alternately torn in pieces by the oppreſſion of the Senate, and the

licentiouſneſs

licentiousness of the people. Nor did our hatred to the regal dignity spring from an honourable, but from a disgraceful source. Hence the unworthy and cruel consequences were conformable to the injustice of the cause: and what was this cause, but the affair of Lucretia, which, in truth, was not sufficient to awaken such implacable revenge? Are not you the people who violated, not one, but six hundred women, during the reign of Romulus? and why should you be thus incensed against the son of your King, for a crime much less than that of your ancestors? Behold the complaints of a woman drive you to mad anger against the royal dignity, to despise, to detest it, to persecute it. O sagacious people, who gavest credit to a weeping adulteress, who told you that, in the silence of the night, she had been subdued by the violent embraces of one man, as if he were the giant Briareus! O just people, who expelledst his royal father, neither knowing nor approving the doubtful transaction!"

As a ſtorm ſuddenly agitates the waves of the ſea, ſo the Spectres, who were liſtening with calm attention, then, trembling, murmured like the wind in the foreſt. In the mean time, a female Shade appeared, who advanced, clothed in a white veil, deſirous of drawing attention by her tears and her expreſſions of grief. She now plunged into the thickeſt of the crowd, and now appeared out of it, like the moon among the clouds; when the multitude, which ſhe had diſturbed, leaving an opening, ſhe remained diſtinct in the midſt, and ſtopped. Through the tranſparent veil which deſcended to her feet, was ſeen her lovely form, like a roſe clothed in morning dew; but ſuddenly rending it from a new impulſe of anger, ſhe diſcovered the whiteneſs of her well-formed ſhoulders and her heaving boſom, upon which, however, with modeſt repentance, ſhe held with her right-hand the diſordered veil, leaving a great part of her figure uncovered. She caſt down her weeping eyes; anguiſh was painted

painted upon her forehead, from which the thick golden hair fell upon her ſnowy limbs. Ah, how is the heart chilled by the ſight of beauty in diſtreſs! As I looked upon her, I already felt the thrill of ſoft compaſſion run through my limbs, when my attention was drawn by a general whiſper, which repeated the name of Lucretia. Pomponius, not diſturbed by the tumult, nor by the fame of ſo illuſtrious a woman, approaching her, thus intrepidly continued: "O celebrated conſort of Collatinus, do not be offended at my conjectures concerning thee, ſince they ariſe, not from hatred to thee, but from love for truth. Now thou mayſt thyſelf declare it, after ſo many ages of uncertain opinion." Then the lady raiſed her diſconſolate countenance, and turned towards him who queſtioned her her mournful eyes. She panted for breath, ſhe trembled, and anguiſh ſeemed to choak her utterance. A mournful ſilence prevailed in the air: the crowd, waiting in an attitude of aſtoniſhment, expected to hear

 from

from her ſome intereſting information; ſuch is the attention of the audience when a ſkilful muſician is ready to delight them with his harmonious voice. But the lady remained in that diſtreſsful ſituation, as if unable to ſpeak, or as if doubtful which of the many words that crowded to her lips ſhe ſhould utter or retain. At length, in a humble manner, ſhe bowed her head upon her delicate breaſt; and, as if overcome with grief, threw herſelf upon a tomb. All hope of hearing her being now not only deluded, but extinguiſhed, Tullius thus broke ſilence:—"I do not know, my Atticus, why thou now takeſt pleaſure to offend this lady with thy ſevere words, though, when amongſt us, they flowed ſo mildly from thy lips. Certainly ſilence and darkneſs are not the only teſtimonies of the inſults ſhe ſuffered; but the magnanimous penalty ſhe inflicted on herſelf is a demonſtration of her innocence. Neither her bed nor her thoughts were contaminated by the royal licentiouſneſs; her body only

was defiled by it; in which, as being profaned, this chaste spirit disdained afterwards to dwell. See the deep wound in her beauteous bosom, the pure asylum of lovely children. Is not the sword by which it was torn sufficient to destroy calumny?" Atticus answered: "Although it be a bold attempt to dispute with thee, O father of the Roman eloquence, yet we are at length permitted to judge here of human affairs without the confinement of timid opinion; and as thou defendedst, with wonderful art and eloquence, not only the innocent, but the guilty, so here thou speakest decidedly on a very uncertain subject. I freely declare, that her story seems very improbable." Marcus Brutus was grieved at these words, recollecting that Junius Brutus, from whom he was descended, took the yet reeking dagger from her bosom, and promoted the severe and memorable revenge. But Atticus continued:—"For she was not threatened with death, according to her own account, by a cruel lover, against whom

her complaints would have been vain, but in her husband's house, full of slaves and relations, and for the simplicity of those times magnificent. Sextus, it seems, threatened to lay a dead slave by her side, as an ignominious proof of her guilt; yet it is evident that such a crime was difficult to be executed, and easy to be prevented by loud and desperate cries. I am sorry, for the sake of her reputation, that in that hateful trial she should imagine the best way to escape infamy, was to comply with the will of her lover. A surprising docility this, in a pattern of chastity, to refrain not only from defending herself, but from calling for assistance in that distressing situation! An astonishing determination to contaminate her bed, and then purify it with her own blood! Nor was the royal youth deformed or disagreeable, but handsome and valiant: he was courteously received by her; he sat down with her to the social supper, and was afterwards conducted by the slaves to the hospitable chamber.

chamber. O thy childiſh ſimplicity, that in harbouring that gueſt, in whoſe eyes female penetration muſt have ſeen the flames of deſire, thou didſt not faſten thy chamber! Thou hadſt not near thee any maid-ſervant, ſo that the midnight traitor, like the moſt favoured lover, came unoppoſed to the altar of thy faith, ill defended by frail virtue!" Here Brutus interrupted: "Why then did ſhe reveal with infamy, what ſhe might have denied with honour, and concealed with grateful impunity? Could there be a more fooliſh reſolution, than to excite a fatal quarrel againſt the lover? She alone was her own voluntary accuſer, and the inſtigator of vengeance againſt her perfidious raviſher. Had ſhe yielded unreluctantly to the embraces of the youthful ſeducer, what madneſs more improbable, than to accuſe herſelf, to kill herſelf, while love alone, ſilent and ſatisfied, was privy to the ſecrets of the night?" Pomponius quietly replied: "Thoſe who lived in thoſe times, know that

that Sextus was a vain-glorious young man, who, inſtead of concealing his ſucceſs in love intrigues, ſhameleſsly boaſted of it. It is alſo known from hiſtory, that he undertook to conquer her virtue for the ſake of laughing at Collatinus, who held it up as a model, and invincible. Proud, therefore, of this difficult triumph, he was eager to diſplay it in deriſion of the credulous huſband. When the intoxication of illicit pleaſure was removed from the lady's mind, ſhe perceived herſelf to be on the brink of a precipice, and reſolved to die illuſtrious by a falſehood, rather than live to inevitable and infamous puniſhment."

Then Brutus turned towards her, and ſaid: "Thou, who in life revealedſt the ſecret diſgrace, why doſt thou not now ſpeak, and at once put thy detractors to ſilence?" Alas, at this invitation, I ſaw tears flow from her diſconſolate eyes, which wiping away with her veil, ſhe afterwards concealed her features with it entirely,

tirely, as if to prevent their being ſuffuſed with painful bluſhes: ſhe then ſat down in affliction upon the ground, hid her face with both her hands, and reſted it on her knees, as overwhelmed with miſery. The ſurrounding Shades looked at each other with mutual aſtoniſhment at that ſilence; and Brutus, with a compaſſionate voice, added: "Oh, unhappy, if thou wert innocent, and art not by ſome unknown fate deprived of ſpeech, whence thou ſuffereſt the new inſult of being accuſed, and art unable to ſpeak freely in thy own defence!" Hearing this, ſhe roſe up in diſtreſs, and ſeemed to declare that ſhe was dumb from a celeſtial decree; on which account Brutus, conſoling her, concluded: "If thou wert frail in that night for ever doubtful, thou becameſt magnanimous the following day, and mayſt boaſt of having, by thy ſtriking example, founded our liberty." While he went on with ſoothing words, relating the baniſhment of the Kings, the glorious vengeance, the illuſtrious events that ſucceeded,

ceeded, her eyes ſeemed joyful as ſhe liſtened to him, and her countenance leſs melancholy, as the ſky is refreſhed by the breath of the Zephyr. She then diſappeared, leaving every mind in the ſame uncertainty as at firſt, concerning her reputation. The crowd in the mean time diſputed with various opinions, concerning that event, over which was ſpread the veil of time, and the impenetrable ſilence of love. But now the ſtars grew pale, and the drowſy Shades fled before the riſing Aurora. I, buried in that cavern, certainly was not ſenſible to the viciſſitudes of light and darkneſs upon the earth: but as in a confined veſſel, the pilot diſtinguiſhes his way by obſerving the direction of the needle; ſo, when I ſaw the Spectres waver in uncertainty, loſe their voice, and finally vaniſh through the air, I was aſſured that the beams of day, denied to them, now predominated in the heavens. I came out therefore with faultering ſteps; nor did I ſeem to be really in life, till I felt the dewy breath of Aurora, and was ſoothed

ſoothed by the ſweet warbling of the birds, who, rejoicing in the returning ſplendor of the morning, infuſed by their jocund and varied ſtrains, an amorous ſoftneſs into the heart, which was expanded in hearing them, while the mind abandoned all its cares to languid oblivion.

END OF THE SECOND NIGHT.

THE

ROMAN NIGHTS.

THIRD NIGHT.

FIRST DIALOGUE.

Of Junius Brutus and Virginius, who ſacrificed their own children, at whoſe appearance a diſpute ariſes concerning the merits of theſe magnanimous actions.

THE wonders which I had ſeen and heard, excited in my mind a crowd of ideas; for I conſidered to what a height human knowledge might be raiſed, if it were permitted to men excelling in any other particular branch of learning, to converſe with the Spirits of thoſe who had formerly been diſtin-

guiſhed in the ſame ſcience. Hence, the regret of the learned for the uncertainty of ſo great a part of hiſtory would be alleviated; and antiquity would no longer remain ſeparated from us, as by an immenſe deſert. But perhaps the cultivators of the ſciences, would not receive any ſatisfaction from this; for only a ſlight glimpſe of them appears through the miſt of ages, as if they were oppreſſed by fortune, and reduced to ruins. Now by converſing with the departed, we ſhould hear the hiſtory of inventions, and their progreſs, and perhaps contrivances unknown to us, and ſurpriſing experiments, and myſteries of nature, which are concealed in the boſom of oblivion. We ſhould no longer be ignorant of the names of the authors of uſeful diſcoveries and agreeable arts, nor of the ſecret cauſes of ſo many paſt events, now inveſtigated by us in vain, with fatiguing conjectures. It would then appear, that time, revolving in its ample ſphere, gives and takes away the

ſciences from among nations. We ſhould leſs frequently complain of the ſhortneſs of life, in which the mind has ſcarcely attained its full ſtrength, and ſketched out an imaginary plan of wiſdom, when, lo, the fatal trumpet ſummons us away! While I was perplexed amid theſe conſiderations, the diſcourſes I had heard ſtill murmured in my ear, and the figures remained impreſſed upon my eyes.

The following night, therefore, ſtill more eager after new prodigies, I deſcended, with compaſſionate reſpect, into thoſe profound receſſes. Nor did I ſtand long breathleſs with anxious expectation, for M. Tullius immediately appeared; and coming towards me with a look of ſatisfaction, began: "This deſire of thine to converſe here, is not only noble, but perſevering. Not only is thy breaſt free from the influence of fear, but the more thou ſeeſt us, the more thou art anxious to confer with us." And I anſwered: "It is common, in this life, for

warriors

warriors to be intrepid in battle againſt enemies thirſting for their blood. Why then ſhould I fly the incorporeal preſence of ſuch minds, which, when covered with the body, were accuſtomed to be terrible to the proud, and kind to the humble ? I come, with reſpect, to your innocent Empire, and fear the living much more than you ; for they are agitated by pernicious paſſions, and you have laid them aſide with your frail covering. And how can your generous nature be ſo depraved in this gulf of eternity, as to induce you to injure one who admires you ?" Tullius continued with kindneſs : " Thou judgeſt truly, O ſincere deſcendant ! of our nature. And although my friend Pomponius, with his free philoſophy, approaching to Grecian effeminacy, has blamed, as thou haſt heard, the Roman vices, deſcribing them as infinite and monſtrous ; yet even his ſevere tongue went not ſo far as to mention meanneſs among their number. For, even in our moſt reprehenſible actions, there

 never

never was wanting the dignity of greatneſs, nor the ſplendor of virtue, eſpecially of that ſpecies which led us to oppoſe ourſelves only to the ſtrong." While he was converſing with me, the caverns were filled with an infinite multitude; wherefore, turning himſelf to them, he remained in ſilence. He, however, kept his eyes fixed upon a Shade, which, among all the reſt, particularly intereſted him. His features were ſevere, and advanced in years; he was clothed in the conſular toga, and he held by the hands two youths who accompanied him, with their countenances turned towards the ground. The mind could not decide, whether this attitude aroſe from a conſciouſneſs of guilt, or from a modeſt reſerve, ſuitable to their years. At their entering was heard a general murmur of compaſſionate lamentation; but the Conſul, not affected by this, with a ſevere look, made a ſign for ſilence, and then, with an air of authority, exclaimed: "Why do you grieve for theſe? as if their

ſight ought not to inflame with generous anger, every free, great, and truly Roman breaſt. Do you grieve for me? I conſider myſelf as worthy, not of your pity, but your admiration. I am not unfortunate, but rather happy in having taught you, by a magnanimous example, that the firſt of all virtues is to revenge the injuries of our country." Then I heard a voice among the crowd, which ſaid: "Our eyes, unmoved by the horrors of battle, were bedewed with tears, when the axe fell at the ſignal of a father's hand." He anſwered: "In that great trial I was ſtill a father. Let no one think that I did not feel a father's anguiſh, but I conquered it for your ſakes." "Alas!" then, exclaimed that Spectre from amidſt the crowd, "thy toga was ſprinkled by thy own blood guſhing from their headleſs trunks, and our eyes were clouded with terror at the ſight." The Conſul angrily replied: "O ſervile compaſſion! But no—the Romans did not experience it, and thou waſt only affected by it,

 becauſe

because a timid admirer of the tyrants. Vile ſlave of the Tarquins, bold only in preſuming, before the magnanimous Romans, to contend with Junius Brutus, the father of their illuſtrious liberty." Thus ſaying, he violently puſhed the two youths towards the multitude, looſing them from his hands, and added: "Theſe, with my blood in their veins, attempted to bring your necks under the yoke, when you had ſcarcely ſhaken it off. How could I, the Conſul, the deliverer of my country, its hope, its defence, its avenger, call myſelf without a crime, or think myſelf without ſhame, the father of its betrayers? Rome, harraſſed by the ſnares of the exiled tyrants, not yet confirmed in her liberty, demanded a ſevere example to ſupport her, at her ſecond birth. Whoever among you laments it, is guilty of ingratitude." The Spectre ſaid: "The puniſhment was not unjuſt; but the courage of the father in pronouncing it, cruel; his calmneſs in ſeeing it, horrible." Then

Junius

Junius rested his hand upon his side, and interrupted: "Was I not, in my place as Consul, their Judge?" The other answered: "But thou wast a father." "Yes," said Junius, "but more so of my country than of its enemies." The Spectre added: "Great was the crime, clemency fatal, punishment necessary; but there was no reason that thou shouldst impose it, and still less that thou shouldst enjoy it with atrocious severity." "Who," exclaimed Brutus, "but I, who gave them to you, ought to have freed you from those wicked favourers of royal pride?" He returned: "The Senate and the people." Then Junius was silent, as if perplexed by various ideas. He knit his dark brows, as if collecting his thoughts for some unanswerable reply, but a mournful silence closed his lips. And when the Spectre had respectfully waited some time, he at length concluded: "Oh! Junius, if, descending from the curule chair, thou hadst left Rome free to judge thy sons, the splendor of thy

ſame would not have been obſcured by the guilt of parricide." Then, as if new ideas had calmed his anger, he gravely and ſlowly, anſwered: "If I were not already undeceived with reſpect to human glory, in this ſea of truth, your ſilence at ſuch words would be ſufficient for that purpoſe. I am ſorry, O Romans, to be obliged to ſee you again after twenty-three ages, and ſtill more to find you unworthy of ſuch an example of magnanimity." Then, with haughty contempt, he looked at the crowd, and vaniſhed through the air. His ſorrowful ſons remained, and threw themſelves weeping on the tombs, but no one ſeemed to pity them. Cicero, who was near me, turned upon the ground his thoughtful countenance, which was overſpread, as with a cloud, by a ſudden melancholy; his mind, which, in his works, had deſcribed with ſo much wiſdom the duties of a good life, ſeemed to be involved in inexplicable doubts. My underſtanding was perplexed by the late conteſt, and

therefore I respectfully asked of my master some assistance from his profound learning: He, penetrating the weakness of my thoughts, said: "The most sagacious of your speculations will always be doubtful in defining human virtues. Among you a narrow boundary separates the good from the bad, and their confines are sometimes indistinct, variable, and an eternal cause of irreconcilable opinions. It never was agreed among us, whether the killing of Horatia, and the condemnation of Manlius, ought to be accounted great or cruel actions. Thou thyself, not long ago, hast heard it disputed even here, if Marcus Brutus should be regarded as a traitor or a hero. Hence, in a great part of your knowledge, but principally in what relates to extraordinary duties, it appears to me that no method is so safe as not to affirm."

Thus Tullius concluded, when two Shades came forward, who had not appeared

peared before. One was of a ſerocious aſpect, armed with a breaſt-plate, and a ſhining helmet; he graſped in his right hand a knife reeking with blood, ſo that it dripped upon the ground; he rolled around his terrible eyes, his beard was black and ſhort, his brows threatening, his lips trembling, his mien proud and reſolute. In his left hand he held a young woman, whom he drew along with him: ſhe ſorrowfully followed, dreſſed in a white habit; her neck and her arms were almoſt naked, and her feet only covered with light ſandals; ſhe held down her face, which her long hair covered like a veil; her ſoft eyes ſhone through it, like ſtars among the clouds. "This is ſhe," exclaimed the warrior, "the moſt unfortunate and the moſt glorious of virgins. Behold the cruel knife, which, on a noble occaſion, I plunged into her innocent heart. I, loving her as a father, murdered her as an executioner. She grieves even here, inconſolable after ſo many revolutions of the ſpheres,

ſpheres, at having quitted her lovely body, in the flower of her youth, ſeparated for ever from her lover, when the nuptial morn was on the point of riſing." Then the virgin ſhook her head, ſo that her hair, falling on her ſhoulders, diſcovered her countenance, dazzling with attractive beauty. Ah! even the hand of a Zeuxis, of a Timanthus, or an Apelles, would have trembled in imitating the ſoft melancholy diffuſed over thoſe inimitable features; how then ſhall I take up the pen, and deſcribe it with humble words? I can only ſay, that ſhe raiſed up her dewy eyes, and with a tender voice ſpoke to this effect: "Ah! mournful ſolitude, in whichI wander eternally, without ever meeting the brave and loved Icilius! Why did my face pleaſe the tyrannic Decemvir? Unhappy beauty, which I valued becauſe it was agreeable to my faithful lover, but fatal ſince it excited wicked deſires in the perſecutor of my ſhort-lived happineſs! Oh! father, behold the wound; I do not lament it." Thus ſaying, with

with ſoft breath, plaintive like the dove, ſhe ſhewed in her virgin breaſt a deep and ſtill palpitating wound. He turned his head away, threw down the dagger, bent down his eyes, covered them with his right hand, moved anew to compaſſion at that long-paſt event. This attitude of grief was anſwered by the general pity of the crowd, who murmurred in mournful whiſpers. But among all was heard the voice of Marcus Brutus, who exclaimed: " O brave Virginius, how much more glorious would thy action have been, hadſt thou immediately plunged into thy own boſom that knife ſtill reeking with her dear and chaſte blood." He anſwered: " It was a greater proof of fortitude to ſurvive her. Agonizing I took in my arms this beautiful and beloved virgin, my daughter, whom I had killed on ſo dreadful an occaſion. I ſhould have died with anguiſh, but virtue ſupported me for magnanimous revenge. To me, who every day met death in the field in defence of Rome—to me, marked

with

with many honourable ſcars, it certainly was not difficult to abandon a life, already rendered hateful to me by her misfortune. I ſurvived to breathe the contaminated air, to endure the fatal light of heaven; I conquered the horror of life; I checked the ſuggeſtions of deſpair; I remained on the earth, an implacable avenger of my injuries and yours. Then, when Tribune, I reſtored the City, annihilated tyranny, and was the ſecond founder of your liberty.

Then Tullius, with a mild countenance, interpoſed between them, and ſaid: " As, in diſeaſes of the body, it is moſt difficult to cure the relapſed; ſo thou, Virginius, hadſt a more difficult taſk than Junius Brutus. Thy Rome, fallen for the ſecond time into the malady of ſlavery, ſeemed exhauſted, or unworthy a better ſituation. Thou, however, O Marcus, waſt in this incomparable—that, when the laſt ſpark of liberty was extinguiſhed in every heart, its flame blazed in thine: and as thou diſdainedſt to

live in ſlavery, ſo thou blamedſt this valiant deſtroyer of his own daughter, for not having followed her in the paths of death. But thou forſookeſt a country, whoſe glory was obſcured for ever, and he remained in it when riſen to new ſplendor: he lived to complete the effects of his illuſtrious action, to confirm his uſeful vengeance, to die happy in mature liberty. Ah, do not contend, diſtinguiſhed minds, for you were equal in virtue, and differed in your ideas only from the diverſity of your ſituations."

Then M. Brutus, agreeably to his ancient friendſhip for Cicero, anſwered: "Thou makeſt me feel again the calm produced by that converſation, which during our lives frequently ſerved to alleviate care. My mind was launching out into the ſea of human opinions; my diſagreement was without anger, my opinions without pride, my judgment moderate, my words courteous. O incomparable pleaſure, to communicate in calm leiſure with minds equally animated by the moſt ſublime ideas!"

ideas!" So ſaying, he held out his arms to Tullius, who ſtretched out his to him in return: but as two clouds, driven by contrary winds, are confounded in one maſs, ſo theſe two Shades were mingled in affectionate embraces.

My mind, in the mean time, was conſidering thoſe two celebrated ladies Virginia and Lucretia, who, at two different times, had both been the cauſe of the Roman liberty. I reflected that this people, who had borne with incredible patience the tyranny firſt of their Kings, and afterwards of the wicked Decemvirs, had only been unable to endure inſults offered to the ſofter ſex, whoſe injured beauty appeared to excite in their hearts an extreme and deſtructive deſperation. Maſſacres, treachery, atrocity, all manner of wickedneſs, they had been ſeen to bear with a diſgraceful cowardice, and like the ſtupidity of cattle. Only on account of the diſtreſſes of women, they were rouſed to a formidable

expreſſion of common revenge. Then, comparing in my mind the two events, I conſidered that one was celebrated by her countrymen for her voluntary death; the other, for having left this glory to her father. But the former was inferior to the latter in purity of manners, for ſhe fell in the trial, and the other anticipated it. Virginia ſeems as a dove offered up in ſacrifice, unprepared for it, who was conſcious of nothing but that ſhe was ſlain by her father's hand, and expired in his arms: ſhe excites compaſſion, and her father terror. But Lucretia, exciting her friends to revenge, and then in their preſence ſhedding her blood, as a dreadful ratification of it, moves us to mournful admiration: for the killing of an innocent daughter, always ſeems barbarous; and if Virginius wiſhed to perform a great action, he might have attacked Appius himſelf proud of his dignity, and have thrown him, pierced with his dagger, from his lofty ſeat;—which plan was very likely to ſucceed, if he em-

ployed to approach the tyrant, the ſame diſſimulation by which he was enabled to remove his daughter from his preſence. And although he has given very good reaſons for ſurviving, yet Lucretia is more magnanimous, in not enduring to live after that odious calamity; and, by the ſplendor of ſuch a reſolution, threw a luſtre on the gloomy ſecrets of that laſt night. And if that atrocity of Virginius is glorious, yet the heart beats with mingled aſtoniſhment and horror, and a compaſſionate voice ſounds in the human breaſt, which exclaims againſt that cruel reſolution; or, if it for a time approve it, conſiders however as terrible that fortitude which preſerved the father from expiring with anguiſh upon the wound.

SECOND DIALOGUE.

Cato, the Cenfor, and Cicero, difpute whether learning corrupts manners.

WHILE my mind was occupied by thefe thoughts, its attention was drawn by the Shade of a man advanced in years, who, coming forward with an air of dignity, ftopped in filence not far from Cicero. His face was rather red, his eyes blue, his temples bald, his eye-brows thick, his look ftern; with his left hand he held up the front of his ample toga, and refted his chin upon his right. "Who art thou?" afked Cicero, "and what doft thou lament?" "Two things," anfwered he; "the one is, having perfecuted with importunate and continual rancour, the fame of thofe illuftrious brothers the Scipios, furnamed Africanus and Afiaticus, for their great exploits in thofe countries; the other, having, by perfevering advice, induced the

Senate to deſtroy Carthage." "Ah! well do I perceive who thou art," exclaimed Cicero, "magnanimous Porcius Cato!" and at the ſame time he opened his arms, approaching him with reſpectful kindneſs. He, however, held out his right hand, as averſe from the ſuſpicious attentions of a perſon unknown to him, and ſaid in a deep voice, "But who art thou?" Cicero anſwered: "One who, though he lived later than thou, being born more than eight luſtra after thy death, was yet acquainted with thy virtues, as if he had been a living admirer of them." This polite commendation did not ſoften the auſterity of Cato, who, after he had remained ſome time in ſilence, thus exclaimed: "O Rome, how much was I miſtaken! by removing thy African rival, I deprived thee of the moſt uſeful field for the exerciſe of thy valour." "Conſole thyſelf, magnanimous Cenſor," ſaid Cicero; "for, after that deſtruction, in which there was more revenge than generous ardour, our empire was extended far and

near

near with incredible profperity. The defpots of the eaft trembled on their fplendid thrones; Africa remained a province of our empire, its ancient pride for ever humbled; our legions penetrated to the fhores of the weftern ocean, which alone was capable of ftopping the courfe of their victories." The Cenfor was buried in thought as he liftened to him, and then afked him: "But thofe triumphs which give thee fuch pleafure, introduced perhaps into thefe walls foreign cuftoms and learning, or did ye maintain the Roman fimplicity?" He anfwered: "We affumed at the fame time the virtues and the vices of the vanquifhed, but our empire became ftill more formidable and glorious: Afia indeed, with its magnificent pleafures, tempered the frugality valued by our anceftors; but the admirable arts and noble learning of Greece foftened the ancient aufterity of our manners. Then we beheld the fplendid habitations of triumphant generals, adorned with the prodigies of the Greek pencil;

and

and the forum, the ſtreets, the temples, with the images of illuſtrious heroes, precious monuments of memorable actions, and of the perfection of thoſe noble arts. Then our minds, formerly careleſs of noble learning, became eager to attain it. Hence the lofty philoſophy of the Greeks, their eloquence, and all the charms of the Athenian Muſes, were received here as the moſt valuable acquirements: thus a people whoſe buſineſs it was to excel in all things every other, juſtly avoided the ſhame of being inferior in learning to the vanquiſhed." Then Porcius ſaid: "Thou relateſt that the ſoft corruptions of Aſia, and the ſubtlety of Grecian ſpeculations, did not check the triumphant progreſs of our warlike enterpriſes; and I affirm to thee, what I did not ſee with my mortal eyes, but which I beheld with my underſtanding, that the empire perhaps increaſed, but virtue diminiſhed, whence ye combated in remote countries, victorious, but not free." At theſe words, Cicero caſt down his eyes

a little, in ſign of ſorrowful aſſent; and Cato added: "I therefore ſtill commend myſelf, for having driven Carneades and his cavilling followers from our city. They, calling themſelves lovers of wiſdom, obſcured it by their dangerous ſubtleties: equally ready to defend or to attack either truth or falſehood, eloquence was proſtituted in their mouths. Hence I am certain, that when that fallacious learning took root among you, which audaciouſly diſputes on things both human and divine, then all love and virtue was extinguiſheded in your breaſts, leaving only regard for yourſelves; for ſubmiſſion to the law, contempt of death, deſire of illuſtrious reputation, love of juſtice, moderation in public, and mildneſs in private life, are the important effects of ancient and wiſe inſtitutions. But to ſeduce the mind from this noble ſeverity to ſenſual delights, and to intellectual pride, is a work that requires little time, and no labour. Men are naturally inclined to effeminate modes of life, impatient of the

reſtraint of the laws, and ready to launch out into the moſt extravagant pleaſures that may be ſet before them. Hence the charms of the Muſes, and ſtudious leiſure, turn their minds from war to amuſements, from the forum to ſilence, from public to private occupations, and render men uſeleſs to their country. Plunged in ſuch ſoft corruption, all affection for liberty grows cool in their hearts: become afterwards contented ſlaves, they draw their ſwords at the nod of the tyrant; collected in the field like cattle, their victories ſerve no other purpoſe than to acquire companions in ſlavery. Now I am certain that this was the caſe with you!"

He ceaſed—and Cicero, not without ſome diſpleaſure, replied: "Well doſt thou ſhew what thou waſt in life, O enemy of philoſophy! ſince thou attributeſt to it thoſe pernicious conſequences which were produced among us, not by it, but by the blind impetuoſity of civil diſcord: and, in

truth,

truth, noble learning would have a mournful deftiny, if it were to be confidered as an odious poffeffion and a contemptible artifice, and if a great and victorious people could not, at the fame time, be learned, and dear to the Mufes. The Egyptians therefore, whofe origin is concealed by the veil of time, were celebrated as the forerunners and the mafters of all nations in the contemplation of the heavens, in the inveftigation of nature, in the magnificence of the arts: their vaft empire endured more than twenty ages; and perhaps the waves of time have not yet overwhelmed thofe proud monuments which contain the humble teftimonies of death. Before us, the Etrurians were a moft powerful nation, celebrated for their knowledge in all the arts and fciences. The ancient Perfians were refpected for the wifdom of their Magi. The kingdom of the Syrians was extenfive, flourifhing, and of long continuance, although they were lovers of agreeable ftudies, efpecially under the mild go-

vernment of that Antiochus who, not by terror but by admiration, was juſtly called the Great. The kingdom of Pontus was durable and illuſtrious, and was governed by that Mithridates who was ſo profoundly ſkilled in every ſcience, that he ſeemed by nature to be maſter of them all. But if, as averſe from monarchies and their ſubjects, thou doſt not value examples drawn from thoſe tyrannies, turn thy eyes to the Eaſt, and behold the ſucceſsful, the poliſhed, the formidable Greece, the mother of valuable learning: her ſtatues, her paintings, her monuments, her eloquence, her poetry, did not leſſen her contempt of death, nor her ardent love of liberty."

"Since thou telleſt me," interrupted Porcius, "of the Greek Republics, I muſt bid thee recollect, that only one of them was laſting, namely, the ſober, the auſtere, the rigid Sparta. From her were baniſhed all barren ſpeculations, deceitful eloquence, the alluring temptation of rewards, and

every art tending to ſoften the heart by effeminate corruption. She, ferocious but great, left to Athens the chiſel and the pen, and brandiſhed the ſword. Hence, Athens, to the ſhame of the celebrated laws of Solon, called the Wiſe, fell in a ſhort time under the tyranny of Piſiſtratus; and Sparta, who ſtrictly adhered to her auſtere ſimplicity, Sparta alone, among all nations, endured more than ſeven ages, conſtantly preſerving her laws and her manners. In her, eloquence itſelf was an enemy to all ornament, ſparing of words, rich in ideas, ſerious, unadorned, victorious. In this manner men diſcourſe, who ſtudy actions rather than words." He ceaſed, turned his back, and went away, as if that diſpute were diſagreeable to him. I then conſidered how Cicero, who, by his eloquence in the roſtrum and by his ſtyle in his writings, had not among the Romans, nor perhaps among mankind, any ſuperior, could be liſtened to with a faſtidious ear by that ſevere Ancient to whom he was unknown.

unknown. He, however, appeared rather vexed at this rude departure. But Pomponius mildly ſaid to him: "Thy diſpleaſure is juſt, becauſe awakened by love for excellent learning. Thou, however, who waſt accuſtomed to open no writings oftener or with more pleaſure than thoſe of Plato, whoſe eloquence appeared to thee to be that of Jupiter, well knoweſt that he baniſhed the divine Homer from his imaginary Republic." Cicero joyfully replied: "He however would not have been willing to live in it; for, if he had not taſted as it were at the pure fountain, the majeſtic eloquence of that Poet, Plato would never have poſſeſſed that magnificence of ſtyle, that dignified ſimplicity, and that abundance of charms, by which his ſometimes inextricable opinions captivate the mind with flattering illuſion. He thought fit to contrive the plan of a perfect government, ſince the world offered no example of ſuch a one for imitation; and it is fortunate that no nation has attempted

to reduce this refined theory to practice, which would have exposed the reputation of that illustrious writer to the cavils of the ignorant."

Marcus Brutus, who till now had silently and modestly listened to the discourse, as a friend to philosophical arguments, suddenly rushed forward towards a Shade, exclaiming: "O Porcia, more united to me by noble sentiments than by the ties of marriage, what was thy fate after I fell with Rome?" She replied: "Didst thou think I could remain there, the widow of the last of the Romans? I descended to the abyss of darkness, to be there united with thee. Ah, vain hope! After eighteen ages of fatiguing research, I at length meet with thee again in this immense obscurity!" Thus saying, they mingled in tender embraces. Then Brutus placed her left arm under his right; and she, with affectionate softness, tempered with modest reserve, turned towards him her majestic

and beautiful countenance. They appeared in the mean while to be anxioufly communicating to each other infinite and interefting intelligence. The multitude remained filent, venerating that faithful affemblage of every virtue.

THIRD DIALOGUE.

Pompey and Cæſar diſpute with their ancient rancour; but the latter, overcome by the arguments of the former, is at length ſilent. The Triumvirs come up, among whom Antony is ſtill the ſlave of Cleopatra.

As, when ſome remarkable phænomenon is ſeen in the ſky, the timid vulgar murmur as they behold; ſo the crowd of Spirits ſuddenly began to murmur in confuſed whiſpers. All looked at a proud Shade who came ſlowly forward; and Tullius, turning to Pomponius, who was by his ſide, ſaid: "He alone, had his deſtiny been more favourable, was capable of maintaining us in liberty. Mithridates, whoſe vaſt empire contained nations of twenty-two languages, the only King we feared, an implacable enemy, after thirty years war,

was, by his victories, driven to the extreme parts of the Eaſt, and conſtrained to plunge into his own breaſt that ſword which he brandiſhed in vain againſt the Roman people. This is he who cleared the ſea of pirates in the ſpace of three months. He fought againſt twenty-two monarchs, conquered more than two millions of warriors, took eight hundred and forty-ſix ſhips, and fifteen hundred and thirty-eight cities, ſubdued all the nations between the Palus Mæotis and the Red Sea; and yet, when the defence of his country was confided to him, avoided the preſence of Cæſar, and, fighting at Pharſalia, the moſt unfortunate of his battles, in ſupport of the better cauſe, ſeemed overcome by the fate of Rome. But inſtead of falling with her that day, the laſt for all true Romans, he entruſted himſelf to royal power, proving, by his fatal example, how deſervedly we held it in abhorrence; for, being betrayed by it, he fell, upon the inhoſpitable ſhore, a wretched inſtance of the inſtability of fortune."

At

At these words the Dictator interrupted: "If this man, although called the Great, and commanding at Pharsalia a superior army, was conquered by me, let him not complain of fate, but of my valour. Am I not he who have subdued eight hundred cities and three hundred nations; who have fought fifty battles against three millions of armed men, and (if it be fit to boast of slaughter among the dead) have sent with the sword a million of ghosts to this abyss below?" Pompey in the mean time listened in silence to these haughty expressions. His aspect was noble, and his countenance bore some resemblance to that of Alexander the Great. All stood in a respectful attitude, waiting his approach, except the Dictator, who advanced to meet him, and then stopped, and Pompey remained at a small distance from him. Then they looked at each other with a martial air, recollecting their ancient rivalship: they were silent, as if the greatness of their thoughts were above all power of utterance; their eyes were

were threatening, their brows frowning, and each laid his hand on the hilt of his ſword. Pompey already ſeemed to be ſlowly unſheathing it, when behold a female Shade, dreſſed in a white robe, interpoſed between them. With both her hands ſhe threw over her ſhoulders the veil which covered her face, and diſplayed her majeſtic countenance; it was ſorrowful but beautiful, and moſt worthy of pity. The drops of anguiſh diſtilled, from her tender eyes, upon her boſom, like pearly dew. Then in an affectionate manner ſhe laid her beautiful hand on the right hand of Pompey, and ſaid: "Ah! cannot even death appeaſe in you the flames of civil diſcord?" Pompey turned round to her, and, at the ſound of her voice, ſeemed immediately to be calm. Cæſar drew back a little, and ſtood looking at the majeſtic Lady. She then fell fainting on the breaſt of Pompey, and, claſping with her ſoft arms thoſe warlike ſhoulders, heaved a mournful ſigh; her long and golden hair fell upon her white boſom;

bosom; even Pompey, with his eyes cast down, sighing as he supported her, was so touched with pity, that I beheld some tears fall from those eyes which had beheld unmoved such scenes of slaughter. Many of the Shades who were present, covered their faces with the folds of their robes, mutually concealing their extreme sorrow; but the Lady raised her disconsolate countenance, and putting away the hair from it, said in a soft voice: "O unfortunate and magnanimous husband! I myself beheld thee on that very day on which, a few years before, thou hadst triumphed over Mithridates, land overcome by fortune, upon the shores of Egypt, and there murdered; why didst thou betake thyself to barbarous Lybia, infamous for its treachery?" Pompey answered: "Every land, every shore was less dangerous and inhospitable to the Romans than this country, from the time that fortune rewarded that man's vices;" so saying, he pointed to the Dictator, and looked at him angrily. He, with a smile of disdain,

disdain, said: "O thou, here brave in words, and a coward at Pharsalia, if thou wert willing to survive thy glory, why didst thou not confide thyself to me, always severe to the proud, but merciful to those who sought for pardon?" Pompey angrily replied: "My glory, I hope, still lives in the minds of the virtuous, because I was always terrible to the enemies only of Rome, and always obedient to her; but thy fame, if it be yet heard, will be an unwelcome sound, because thy victories were mournful to thy country, and the blood which thou exultest in having shed was that of Romans." "I rather lament having shed it," answered Cæsar, "but was obliged to it by the cruel necessity of fortune. Thou knowest not that, when near Alexandria there was brought to me, after my victory, a fatal testimony of thy death, I shed tears at the sight." Pompey was affected, and interrupted—"But what was it?" And Cæsar added—"Thy head and thy ring." At this intelligence, grief

overcast

overcaſt the countenance of Pompey, who remained ſilent, ſtruck with mournful aſtoniſhment; then, ſighing with anger, he ſaid: "I know not whether thoſe tears proceeded from ſorrow or from joy; I only aſk thee whether the wicked bringer of my head received from thee condign puniſhment?" Cæſar caſt down his eyes, and was ſilent. Then the other added: "Yet my aſſaſſins were in thy power, for they eagerly brought to thee that preſent, as a victim to an avenging Divinity." When he heard this reaſoning, Cæſar appeared to condemn himſelf, and the confidence of his look vaniſhed. Wherefore Pompey with a bitter ſmile concluded: "Proud was thy compaſſion towards an enemy, no longer capable of injuring thee: O ſweet tears, like thoſe ſhed at the repreſentation of a tragedy! Thus didſt thou always embelliſh by feigned virtues the real vices of thy heart, which, being by this means deprived of their hateful appearance, were commended, and what is worſe, ſucceſsful.

Hence

Hence, by these artifices, conciliating the applause of the populace, thou wast always magnificent after extortions, temperate after licentiousness, after atrocities merciful. If, to rule over men, it is necessary to transform the appearance of vices into that of virtues, there never was any one more than thou deserving of the crown." The Dictator inclined his head over a tomb, and shewed by his silence that he wished to shun the contest. I, in the mean time, revolved in my thoughts how he was now overcome by the voice of Pompey, as Pompey had formerly been by his sword at Pharsalia, and I knew not what judgment to form on those terrible events: for what would have been the goodness of Pompey, had he been victorious in that contest?

But Cornelia pressed the hand of her husband, and, in a mild manner, said: "Be appeased, O brave warrior! thou seest that that rival Shade no longer resists the imperious voice of truth." While he was

ſurrounded with his periſhable covering, he outraged, with an intrepid countenance, modeſt juſtice; but here he feels its power, and ſubmits to it with trembling. Marcus afterwards coming forward, gave Pompey an account of his conſpiracy, ſucceſsful in its execution, though unfortunate in its conſequences. Then, to conſole him, he related how he himſelf had overtaken, in Aſia, the flying wretch who preſented his head, and, torturing him to death, had at leaſt in ſome degree ſatisfied, in his infamous blood, the inſatiable thirſt of revenge. "O Rome," exclaimed he at length, "who loſt thy beſt citizen at a time when his aſſiſtance was moſt neceſſary to thee! In truth, my fortitude was extraordinary, in not deſpairing of the common ſafety, though deprived of its firmeſt ſupport. We freely gave thee the ſurname of Great; not like trembling ſlaves, who ſtrive, by flattery, to temper the ferocity of their tyrant." "O Marcus," interrupted he, "well do I recognize thee by thy magnanimous ideas!" Then

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he looked with joyful eyes upon the deſtroyer of his ſucceſsful rival, and ſmiled a little from complacency at ſuch an action. Immediately, however, melancholy thoughts appeared on his countenance; overwhelmed with which, he turned to his wife, and ſaid to her: "O Cornelia! I ſtill am ſenſible of human affections, though freed from the confinement of the limbs. I would wiſh then to know, what became of them when they were ſcattered on the faithleſs ſhore?" She replied: "After the Dictator had diſplayed his pretended ſorrow at the ſight of thy reeking head, I cauſed it to be burned with eaſtern perfumes, and placed the aſhes in the temple of avenging Juſtice. The trunk remained on the blood-ſtained ſand, expoſed to the curioſity of the crowd. When they had ſatisfied themſelves with looking at it, thy freedman Philippus waſhed it in the ſea, and covered it with his tunic. Having no other materials for a funeral pile, he burned it, together with the planks of an old ſhip

 which

which had been left on the ſhore, and afterwards covered thy aſhes with that infamous earth. Obiequies illuſtrious for the affection of that ſlave, but mean in compariſon with thy reputation!" He ſtood for ſome time in thoughtful ſilence, and then ſaid: "Storms have already diſperſed that handful of duſt, and ſcattered its atoms through the boſom of the elements; the ſea has covered the humble tomb; not even the place where it ſtood can now be pointed out to the traveller. Behold the end of human ſolicitudes! Man appears upon the earth like the fleeting image of a dream; ages paſs over the proud tombs, and ſcatter them to the winds. The fame of illuſtrious actions can alone reſiſt the tyranny of time. If mine are ſtill celebrated among mortals, I eſteem the contempt ſhewn my remains as a trifling injury." Struck by theſe words, I was on the point of conſoling the magnanimous Pompey, by aſſuring him that his name was not only celebrated, but immortal among us; but ſince the Spectres were

were employed in converfing with each other, and did not regard my prefence, I refrained from fpeaking, and refpectfully continued to liften to them.

They all remained fufpended in filence, becaufe Pompey looked round him with an authoritative air, as one ufed to the command of armies, without directing his difcourfe to any one in particular. Then he exclaimed fuddenly: " But what became of thee, O Rome!" He fpoke in a mournful voice, as if he feared an unpleafant anfwer. Then Cicero came up to him, and faid: " Cæfar, killed by the beft citizens at the feet of thy ftatue, fprinkled it with his blood. But his nephew Octavianus, the heir both of the riches he had collected by bloodfhed, and of his tyranny, in this fo far exceeded him, that he caufed his death to be lamented. This young man, of a ferocious difpofition, placed before his bloody imagination, Cæfar, betrayed on account of his clemency, Sylla, refpected

 on

on account of his cruelty. At the ſame time that Antony, againſt whom I launched in vain the darts of my eloquence, perſecuted the deliverers of their country, and ſeducing her by his artifices, perſuaded her to declare them parricides. To this fatal pair was added Lepidus; a man, as thou knoweſt, unworthy of being raiſed from the crowd. Theſe divided the empire into three parts, as wild beaſts who tear the ſtill trembling prey. Imitators of the proſcriptions of Sylla, they ſurpaſſed them in number and atrocity, being three executioners inſtead of one. Excited by ferocious emulation, they contended which ſhould be moſt diſtinguiſhed in the career of ſlaughter. Not with ſuch eagerneſs did our anceſtors ſeek to ſignalize themſelves in enterpriſes, uſeful and glorious to their country, as that conſpiracy of tyrants panted to acquire diſgrace to themſelves, and to dye Rome with blood. But I am unable to deſcribe all thoſe execrable cruelties, having been myſelf comprehended in them.

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The axe of the aſſaſſin removed me from the deteſtable ſight of that traffic of murder."

The countenance of Pompey, as he liſtened to theſe ſhocking events, was expreſſive of aſtoniſhment and anger. He ſeemed to dilate himſelf; he raiſed his head, his breaſt ſwelled, his eyes ſparkled; but his anger was martial, his air majeſtic. I ſaw Cicero, however, diſturbed as one over whoſe head the thunder burſts, and turn towards the right hand his pale countenance. I looked therefore to that ſide, deſirous of beholding new prodigies: I ſaw three diſtinct Shades, who were ſlowly advancing towards us. One of them, who was rather before the others, had a wide forehead, a crooked noſe, a thick beard, and exclaimed: "We heard, we heard the undeſerved accuſations which are here made againſt us. O Cicero, muſt I hear thy unwelcome voice even here below?" Cicero replied: "Wickedneſs ought to be eternally reproached. O effeminate Antony, volup-

voluptuous tyrant, why waſt thou not at leaſt alone, and art not even now? Thy diſpoſition was mild, even in the corruption of thy life. Magnanimous, though an oppreſſor, brave in the field, of a generous nature, forgetful of injuries, ready to oblige; in the midſt of ſuch iniquity a ſufferable tyrant. But this crafty and atrocious Octavianus, who accompanies thee, ſtill diſturbs us with his hateful preſence; and this Lepidus, without virtues, and incapable of ſplendid vices, is ſtill looked upon by us with contempt. It is not be endured that ſuch a man, ſcarcely fit to obey, ſhould be the arbiter of Rome, and ſit in that ferocious meeting, which filled the tombs with dead bodies, and the earth with blood." Lepidus diſappeared at this invective, confirming the opinion of his unworthineſs. But Octavianus looked at Cicero in threatening ſilence: Antony was in a ſpeaking attitude; his troubled eyes, and his compreſſed lips, ſhewed his thoughts to be diſturbed,

and

and words at hand: when a female Shade appeared, who leaned both her hands on his ſhoulder, and then reſted her head upon them. Antony ſtrove to comfort her, and ſhe groaned as if affected by ſome diſtreſſing remembrance: ſhe then ſhewed her face, which, though melancholy, was dignified and beautiful. She was rather brown; her large eyes, admirable for the ſoftneſs they had in themſelves and imparted to others, moved ſlowly and tenderly; the dark eyebrows hung over them with grace; her ſwelling and purple lips remained half cloſed, diſpoſed to give paſſage to the ſweet breath of ſeducing words. Let no one aſk me, how ſhe was dreſſed, or what ornaments ſhe wore; for my eyes were fixed as by enchantment on her countenance, and my mind faſcinated. Antony threw his left hand round her fair neck, and gathering up her veil in his right, compaſſionately wiped away her tears; he then appeared to be converſing with her in a low voice, which, though the moſt profound

profound ſilence prevailed, did not ſtrike my ear. I immediately obſerved, however, Cicero, Pompey, Brutus, Pomponius, and the moſt illuſtrious of the ſurrounding Shades, after a ſhort pauſe, expreſs ſome diſpleaſure in their countenances at the effeminacy of Antony, and Octavianus maliciouſly ſmiled. I conjectured, therefore, that this was the flattering Queen, too well beloved by the Triumvir, on whoſe account his reputation was ſo clouded, that he remains a perpetual example of the fatal power of love. Antony, though her ſlave, had a great and lofty mind; and therefore, diſdaining that ironical neglect of him, turned to Octavianus, and ſaid with impetuoſity: "O cruel ſoul, which was never touched by the empire of the affections! in thy mortal covering thou certainly never felt the ſoft thrill of pity. Thou art, therefore, like thyſelf, when thou rideſt me for being ſubdued by tender cares." The Lady, in the mean time, wept upon his ſhoulder, and ſmo-

thered

thered her ſobs with her veil. Wherefore compaſſion at that took place of anger in Antony, and he exclaimed mournfully: "Ah! wretched day, in which I, expiring in thy fair arms, ſaw the laſt tears in thoſe eyes, the arbiters of my ſoul! Theſe tender hands tore thy diadem, rent thy hair, beat thy heaving boſom, raving, yet ſtill beautiful in the agonies of deſpair. I ſeem to be ſtill in the Egyptian tomb, whither I deſcended in my laſt agonies, to embrace thee. Thy ſweet lips kiſſed my wounds, thy veil ſoftly wiped them, thy tender voice called me general and huſband; at the ſound of which, I left my body with thee, and brought with me hither perpetual anxiety concerning thy fate. But ſince I now learn from thee, how thou forſookeſt thy life to avoid following the chariot of this tyrant, I am ſtill more proud of having loved thee." Then Cleopatra raiſed her faſcinating countenance, from which the clouds of ſorrow were cleared away. Looking at Octavianus,

vianus, with an air of royalty, ſhe ſaid proudly: "I held thy uncle, the Dictator, ſubmiſſive to the empire of my eyes; I ſaw that formidable warrior become a ſupplicating lover to me, yet I did not love him. I careſſed him as a wild beaſt, to mitigate his rage; by which artful flattery, I induced him to ſhew compaſſion to me, who had none for his country. By my beauty and underſtanding I triumphed over the proud Romans, as ſucceſsfully as they did over others by their ſplendid crimes. Many years I ſhared the empire of Africa, and of Aſia, with this thy valiant competitor, and ſaw the kings of thoſe formidable countries proſtrate at my feet. It is a noble effect of the delights of love, to ſubdue ſuch a hero as this was, and to oppoſe thy prevailing fortune. Ill therefore does it become thee, now to deſpiſe a woman, who, for many nights, drove ſleep from thy eyelids, and filled thy haughty ſoul with tormenting cares. When, on the contrary, I was fully acquainted with the

the royal diſpoſition of this magnanimous Antony, with his ingenuous mind, his faithful heart, his propenſity to forgiveneſs and to beneficence, then, for the only time in my life, I ſincerely loved." As ſhe ſaid this, ſhe affectionately preſſed the right hand of Antony, who ſtill felt the power of thoſe fatal charms.

FOURTH DIALOGUE.

Antony and Octavianus mutually accuse each other of cruelty.—Cato and Cæsar dispute concerning the affair of Utica; Brutus and Pomponius interfere to reconcile them.

OCTAVIANUS, who thus far had looked on in silence, then interrupted: "Even here below, according to thy old custom, always mistress of deceitful tears, dost thou presume to delude our minds, though free from corporeal illusions? See the crowned harlot, in what a soft and tender manner she talks of love! Dost thou then dare to dispute here with thy fine speeches, thou who killedst thy brother Ptolemy, and thy sister Arsione, that thou mightest have no companions on the throne?" At these words, the countenance of Antony reddened with resentment, and his lips trembled, as a lion who

is going to roar. Then, with an enraged voice, he exclaimed: "O atrocious mind, how doſt thou dare to blame others for a vice in which thou exceededſt all, namely, cruelty? Art not thou the man who, while yet a youth, during thy bloody conſulſhip, tore out the eyes of Q. Gallius, the Prætor, with thy own hand, whoſe preſence was rendered irkſome to thee, from a ſudden tranſport of fury?" Octavianus, checking his anger, anſwered: "What doſt thou talk about? Art not thou a Triumvir, and a more cruel promoter of the proſcriptions than either I or Lepidus? Doſt thou not remember, that I diſputed with thee two whole days, in order to ſave this great orator, M. Tullius, who had many times ſaved the country by his divine eloquence? All theſe Roman Spirits know, that the odium of this crime falls upon thee, who, as the firſt and neceſſary condition of all agreement between us, obſtinately and inflexibly inſiſted on the death of ſo great a man. And how great

was thy desire to obtain it, clearly appeared from thy ferocious joy, when thou regaledst thy cruel eyes with the sight of his palpitating members: atrocious derision, detestable insult, barbarous exultation, were the tokens with which thou welcomedst his still reeking head and hands. With what cruel complacency didst thou not behold that right hand suspended, which, in his midnight meditations, had guided the stile to expose thy infamous character? And where was it suspended? On the rostrum—yes, in that very place where his celestial eloquence had triumphed. But hope not, O barbarian, that the fame of the virtues of Cicero, or the shame of thy vices, can be lessened by these outrages. No! in vain, in the intoxication of thy joy, didst thou crown with thy own hand that Pompilius, who, though he had been saved by the eloquence of Cicero, when accused of fratricide, became his assassin, and brought his members to thee; ye will both be held in equal execration. Fulvia, however,

however, thy well-matched wife, can alone dispute with thee the glory of those cruelties, who, emulous of such delirious rage, laid the head in her lap, railed at it, derided it, pulled out the tongue, and pricked it with a needle." While Octavianus was proceeding in these invectives, Cicero quietly endured the bitter recollection. Many Shades, pitying so unworthy a death, turned upon him their weeping eyes. "Peace, then," exclaimed Antony; "for we are accomplices in those events, in such a manner, that we cannot dispute which of us is innocent, but only which is least wicked. I seem to be still sitting at the conference of death in the Island of the Rhine—I hear the noise of the stream round the shores: we, in the mean time, converse in low and suspicious whispers, lest the surrounding legions should hear the bloody resolutions. I am, however, sorry for having extinguished this light of our eloquence. No tongue but his own can praise him as he merits. I was driven to

this revenge by the incredible uneasiness he gave me by his declamations, which affected me much more than thy arms: his words struck into my heart like darts, confounded my ambition, and persecuted my power. But if odious actions have any defence, I will say that Cicero endured from me, when conqueror, those injuries which, if I had been conquered, I must have suffered from him: and of this, his disposition, not to mention his invectives full of bitterness, and burning with hostile fury, the Senate and the people had an unequivocal proof, in his continually instigating Brutus to kill my brother Caius, whom he had taken prisoner; which ungenerous revenge Brutus opposed as long as Cicero lived; but when he heard of his death, he slew my brother, defenceless, in his power, in chains, and no longer to be feared, in order to appease the Shade of his friend, punishing him for a fault not his own, though the example could be of no utility, and only to gratify plebeian ferocity." At this intelligence,

Cicero folded his toga on his breaſt, and ſeemed by his countenance to be grieved at hearing it. "I am ſorry," ſaid he to Brutus, "that thy friendſhip for me ſhould have ſo far exceeded thy love for thy country, as to induce thee to grant that vengeance to the former, which thou refuſedſt to the latter. Caius, as well as his brother, was declared by the Senate an enemy of Rome, and therefore it was lawful to kill him in the public defence. To me then thou ſacrificedſt that victim which was due only to the common ſafety." Brutus ſeverely and ſlowly anſwered: "To cut off thoſe who are fatal to their country, is certainly a noble undertaking, and ever delightful to a free mind and ſincere heart. I am therefore ſorry that I permitted Antony to live after the happy day of the Ides of March; for the tree of tyranny fell in Cæſar, yet in Antony ſurvived the root, which ſhot up into a more lofty plant. The death of Caius, however, O Cicero,

always modest in thy words, was not a private but a public satisfaction; for the day in which thy country lost thee, she was without her father: hence it was the duty of one truly her son, to expiate her loss by a speedy vengeance. I gave her such as the opportunity offered: had fortune been just, I would have given greater." Then, turning to the Triumvirs, who looked at him angrily, he intrepidly added: "Dispute no more, O pair of tyrants, which of you is most atrocious. Agree that there is none can equal you in ferocity, except yourselves. Wherefore, ill dost thou boast, O Octavianus, of having defended Cicero for two days: thou gavest him up on the third. O compliant protector of an inestimable life! If thou hadst known its value, thou wouldst not have abandoned it but at the price of thy own. But the fatal secret of that agreement was quickly disclosed; for, on the third day, the cruel demands of each of you being reconciled, Antony gave up the life of Lucius, his

his mother's brother; Lepidus, that of his own brother Paulus, in exchange for that of Cicero, which thou at laſt yieldedſt up. The ſtile, dipped in blood, wrote the horrid barter of the moſt ſacred lives: then, to confirm that alliance of wickedneſs, thou remembereſt, Octavianus, that Antony promiſed thee his daughter Clodia in marriage. Finally, with ſolemn rites you invoked the Gods, ſwearing to be faithful to each other in compacts odious to Heaven. Thus, with thoſe ceremonies which it would be proper to uſe, to rejoice at the ſalvation of the country, did three illuſtrious executioners here celebrate the maſſacre of the virtuous, and the obſequies of Rome."

Brutus ceaſed; and Octavianus, taking him by the hand, replied: "Men, when they ſtand in need of pardon, are humble and ſuppliant; when they have obtained it, they are perfidious and ungrateful. Hence we ſee thoſe very perſons become the aſſaſſins of Cæſar, who, after being over-

come

come by his valour, were saved by his mercy. His betrayers were those whom he embraced as friends, and liberally rewarded with the highest honours. It was therefore necessary for us to be severe to those who had judged us enemies of our country; experience having shewn us, that an extreme perversity of nature never can be tempered by mild treatment; and therefore, rather than wait the effects of the wicked and dissembled designs of others, we determined to prevent them by prudence." At this tyrannical preface, Brutus drew back his hand, and, through disgust, retired to a little distance. But Octavianus smiled, and, turning to Cæsar, added: "Thou wast Dictator, Pontifex Maximus, conqueror of the nations most hostile to Rome; thou first among us had ventured to cross the ocean, and discovered islands till then unknown to the Romans. Yet thou wast murdered by traitors indebted to thee for their lives, and even provided for in thy will:—and where? In

full

full Senate, in the ſacred aſylum, in the preſence of the immortal Gods, ſtabbed by their daggers with atrocious eagerneſs, with three-and-twenty wounds. If any revenge can appeaſe thee, know that I conquered the traitors in Macedonia, where they had collected a vile rabble like themſelves. I kept the head of Brutus, intending to place it at the feet of thy ſtatue in Rome; but the veſſel which contained it was ſhipwrecked, and the ſea deprived me of that reward of my triumph. Thou waſt not, however, defrauded of victims fit to appeaſe thee in thy death, and me who lived to revenge it. I cauſed three hundred priſoners to be ſacrificed at thy altar, on the mournful anniverſary of the Ides of March." Alas!" exclaimed Cæſar, "how canſt thou rejoice at having ſhed the blood of citizens inſtead of that of oxen? Thou well knoweſt that, when alive, I was grieved when I conquered my Romans. What a hateful tribute then didſt thou offer to my aſhes, which yet could not be raiſed again by that

cruel

cruel ceremony!" Pompey liſtened with anxiety to theſe converſations, as he learned from them the hiſtory of what followed, the fate of Rome, the unexpected misfortunes and the fatal conſequences of civil commotions. Octavianus made no reply to the ſevere reproof of the Dictator, as reverencing his authority even in death.

Then there aroſe, in the midſt, a Shade, habited in the toga, and of a grave aſpect. His appearance was of that age which declines, but has not yet fallen to advanced years. His hair was rather grey, and thick upon his ſtern forehead; his look imperious, his eye-brows hairy. He ſtretched his right hand towards the Dictator's breaſt, as if to puſh him away, and with anguiſh exclaimed: "Do I meet thee even here, odious tyrant? and was it not ſufficient to avoid thy preſence that I tore with my own hand my palpitating vitals?" He anſwered, with obliging benignity: "O ſevere Cato, thou enviedſt me the glory of ſaving

thy

thy life, and I envy the magnanimity of thy death." The other added: "A life which is the gift of a tyrant, is worthless and contemptible. Where thou reignedst, death alone was free." Cæsar returned: "Be appeased, O Spirit burning with inextinguishable anger; for I sincerely lamented thy death." Then Cato ironically exclaimed: "O ingenuous sorrow! Thou wast then grieved at the removal of the despiser and enemy of thy deceitful vices?" The Dictator replied: "I pardoned thy followers; nor was any blood shed but thine, the most worthy of all to be preserved. Thy son, who confided his fate to my clemency, remained free and uninjured. Such was that victory; I obtained it without bloodshed; I celebrated it by forgiveness." Then Cato drew back with horror at these words, and said: "Speak of victory, O traitor, to enemies; of pardon, to the guilty, not to the good, not to free citizens. Behold an example of that boldness, astonishing in others, but

ufual with tyrants, to exult in oppreffion, and to call infult clemency! But where art thou, whom I can no longer call my fon? Where art thou, cowardly debtor, for an infamous life, to the deteftable mercy of a tyrant?" The voice of the angry father refounded, without other anfwer than its own echo, through the hollow caverns. The multitude, in the mean time, refpected the paternal forrow of fo illuftrious a citizen. But after he had feveral times invoked the fhade of his fon, and none appeared, "It is very natural, faid he, that fuch a coward fhould not dare to fhew himfelf to the Romans, in Rome. O flave, by me unhappily begotten, remain then always wandering in the gloomy deferts of death." Then, turning to the Dictator, he impetuoufly added: "By what fatal deftiny art thou now here? and how do the Romans, vile even in death, endure thy prefence?" Cæfar, with a boldnefs fuitable to his exalted fortune, anfwered: "O misfortune, not to have here limbs

limbs and arms, that thou mighteſt ſatisfy in a noble conteſt thy inflexible hatred!" Thus angrily ſpeaking, he placed himſelf in a warlike attitude; his eye became fierce, his countenance threatening, his brow ſevere, ſo that I was ſtruck with aſtoniſhment. On the other hand, Cato, as if he were on earth, looked about him for arms; and not finding any, remained grieved and deluded. O terrible effects of civil diſcord! Time has deſtroyed not only the empire of the Romans, but innumerable others poſterior to it; yet the flames of their ancient hatred ſtill burn immortal and inextinguiſhable in thoſe rival Shades! But Brutus interpoſed between them, and ſtretching out his arms, thus ſpoke to them: "Peace, O illuſtrious minds; your contention, as you ſee, afflicts the Romans. It is a ſtrife unworthy of you to renew your quarrels here, where they are without danger, and remain without fame." The Dictator drew back at theſe words, and, appeaſed, replied: "O my ſon, thou knoweſt how

ill I can resist thee, since I abandoned myself to thy dagger." Then Cato, struck with astonishment, exclaimed: "O unexpected vengeance! Ah, Brutus, speak; for, if I had hoped it, I would have remained alive to be thy companion. I am at length appeased, and thou art the happiest of the Romans." Then Brutus related that event to his austere father-in-law, who, as he listened, shewed extraordinary satisfaction. Brutus, however, as a faithful and ingenuous mind, did not omit to bear testimony to the incomparable clemency of the Dictator, to his inviolable faith, to the generous modesty with which he continually tempered his tyranny, soothing rather than violent. Nor did he forget to mention himself as an example, who, though an implacable enemy, obtained from the conqueror, not only life and pardon, but the Prætorship of Cisalpine Gaul; and he concluded, that he had been conquered in two ways, by arms and by beneficence. Afterwards, Pomponius joined in the conversation,

verſation, and ſhewed at ſome length the neceſſity of a perpetual Dictator, and that no one was ever more moderate than Cæſar in the uſe of unlimited power. When they had ſufficiently explained theſe circumſtances, Cato, who had liſtened to them with profound attention, ſaid to Brutus, "It was certainly to be expected that the huſband of my daughter would diſtinguiſh himſelf by ſome enterpriſe worthy of my blood." Then turning to the Dictator, he added: "You fell, an eternal example that neither the favour of fortune, nor victorious arms, nor the baſeneſs of the enſlaved, nor the virtue of the tyrant, can ſecure uſurped power; but that that alone is ſafe, which is loved, becauſe it is juſt. I do not eſteem thy clemency, ſince it was only a moderation in wickedneſs. Hence I can grant thee no other praiſe, than that there never was a worſe citizen than thou, nor a better tyrant."

FIFTH DIALOGUE.

Horace and Pollio dispute concerning the disposition of Octavianus; and afterwards he and Antony debate which of them was the most wicked.

WHILE they were thus discoursing, Octavianus remained silent, as already acquainted with those events; but in the midst of their angry altercation, I saw him smile with pleasure, and kindly welcome a Spectre who came up to him. He was rather fat, and of low stature; his countenance pleasant, his eyes enemies to sorrow. He shewed in his looks agreeable thoughts, the minister of comfort to the illustrious distresses of the great. When he was near Octavianus, he pointed to him with his right hand, and, addressing the multitude, spoke to them in this manner:—"Though

he may have acquired the empire by cruelty, no one was more wise, no one more merciful, or worthy of admiration, after he obtained it. All, therefore, who were subject to his benign power, considered themselves as sheltered in a secure port from the storms of the Republic: and certainly, whoever was not satisfied with that soft repose after long commotions, either did not know the felicity of his times, or did not deserve it." At these words there rushed from the crowd, vehemently extending his arms, and advancing his ample breast, a Spectre, noble and majestic from his venerable age, and exclaimed: "O thou, who fleddest from the fields of Philippi, the poet of tyrants, the parasite of Venusium! I, if no one else expresses his sentiments freely, will speak like a Roman." "O Asinius Pollio," interrupted Horace, dost thou retain even here thy contempt for the best characters? Art thou he who, abandoning his country in a desperate situation to its fate, sheltered himself in the retirement

tirement of Tuſculum, there paſſing, in agreeable ſtudies and learned contemplations, the laſt years of thy long life? If thou thyſelf judgedſt our corruptions inveterate and incurable, what could a faithful citizen aſk of Heaven, but a wiſe moderator of bloody licentiouſneſs? Octavius therefore deſerved as well of his country as Brutus the founder of her liberty: for it is an equally arduous taſk to found a free city, and to correct a licentious one. But thoſe who lived at that time, know that Auguſtus united the empire of one with the well-regulated liberty of all; ſo that the Romans, no longer expoſed to the inſolence of the people, or to the tyranny of the nobles, were free without licentiouſneſs, and obedient without fear; under which mild ſway were diſſipated the clouds that for ſo many ages had obſcured theſe ſkies; and our arms being laid aſide, which for many conſulſhips had been ſtained with no blood but our own, our minds, as if recovered from an atrocious delirium, applied

plied themſelves to noble learning. Rome, formerly the terror of the world and of herſelf, then became a pleaſing abode to her own citizens and to ſtrangers: and if before her own citizens fled from her, then ſhe was reſorted to by thoſe of the moſt remote countries. I paſs over the magnificent edifices with which Octavius ſo adorned this city, that it ſeemed a reſidence more ſuitable to Gods than to men; for wicked inhabitants may dwell in a ſplendid city. I only call to your minds that happineſs, which none of you can deny, enjoyed at the command of this victorious hand, which held with ſuch moderation the ſceptre of the world. He conquered conſpiracies by pardon, and mitigated by his goodneſs that ferocity which long and cruel diſturbances had implanted in your breaſts. Hence every one, as if awakened from a dreadful intoxication of blood, was aſhamed of having partaken of it. Whoever, therefore, judiciouſly conſiders the manner in which Auguſtus uſed his admirable power,

will perceive that it was ſuch as is ſeldom ſeen, abſolute in him, but only for the general advantage."

While thus the Poet of Venuſium delighted to praiſe his illuſtrious maſter, for whom his golden ſtile had written immortal verſes, Aſinius ſhook his head, and ſmiled ſeverely; then he began: "This artifice of tyrants is certainly not new, who after they have aſcended to the throne, through the bloody road of wickedneſs, put on a mild outſide, and the appearance of virtue, in order to induce men to obey them with pleaſure, and even to call themſelves happy. Theu boaſteſt of his virtues, O Flaccus, when all ground for ſuſpicion was removed, becauſe he had deſtroyed all the beſt citizens by the barbarous proſcriptions. Even wild beaſts, when ſatiated with ſlaughter, lay them down to reſt in their dens. But who would not become mild, when his anger being completely ſatisfied, none can moleſt or diſturb him, and when, ſuperior and dreaded

dreaded in every thing and by all, he may despiſe hatred, and need not fear the outrages of fortune? Only a mind diſturbed by a bloody delirium when it had attained a ſituation where the arrows of revenge cannot reach, would preſerve a deſire to injure others. Now if thou wiſheſt to know the natural diſpoſition of him whom thou commendeſt for his goodneſs, recollect the manner in which he obtained that diadem, whoſe praiſe thou waſt continually celebrating on thy flattering, noble, and harmonious lyre: if thou wiſhedſt to behold all the wickedneſs with which it is poſſible for the human mind to be contaminated, turn thy thoughts to the Triumvirate: thou livedſt in thoſe execrable times. That one night of blood and deſolation, which preceded the cruel edict of the proſcriptions, ought to ſuffice of itſelf to render ever odious to thee, the meretricious mildneſs of thy patron; thou knoweſt well that his ſatellites, like famiſhed tigers, roamed about in the dark, ſeeking the victims whoſe

whoſe lives were ſold to them. Theſe ſtreets reſounded with lamentation, with cries, with threats, and with imprecations; no eye was cloſed in ſleep, but all were kept awake by the agonies of deſpair. When the morning aroſe and diſplayed the fatal liſt fixed upon the roſtrum, it was at leaſt known whoſe lives were ſpared; the pale crowd read, at break of day, that liſt of three hundred ſenators, and two thouſand knights, whoſe lives were ſold at a hundred thouſand ſeſterces each. If the other two inſerted in the liſt of the proſcribed, one his brother, the other his uncle, even in this they were rivalled by thy Auguſtus, who placed in it Caius Toranius, formerly his tutor. The gates of the city were guarded, and means of flight cut off both by ſea and land throughout all Italy. Then the bleeding heads were ſeen in all its provinces, which being afterwards brought to the roſtrum in the Forum, received the promiſed reward. Men, a little before in high ſituations, fled, covered with wretchedneſs,

wretchedneſs, and in fear and ſilence concealed themſelves, ſome in the caves of the earth, ſome in the roofs of their houſes, ſome in the moſt abject retreats: others lately diſtinguiſhed for their riches and their actions, implored compaſſion at the feet of their ſlaves, with tears and ſupplications. The cruel and rapacious populace hunted about for the proſcribed: the wiſe were ſtruck dumb with aſtoniſhment at ſuch horrid violations of juſtice and reaſon; ſome fell beneath the attack of the aſſaſſins, ſome voluntarily offered their necks to them, hating a precarious life, and a fatal country: ſome by famine, ſome by ſtrangling, ſome by caſting themſelves from the roofs, ſome by throwing themſelves into the water, or into the fire, anticipated their impending fate, and ſhunned the horrid ſight of mankind; nor were thoſe inſcribed on the fatal liſt the only victims, but many others alſo, either from revenge or miſtake, whoſe bodies were diſtinguiſhed by not being beheaded. But who can deſcribe the

 aſtoniſhing

aſtoniſhing and dreadful circumſtances of thoſe maſſacres? Some, while they were lying on the triclinium with their friends, were ſeized by the hair, by the aſſaſſins, and their headleſs trunks were left at the table, round which the gueſts remained a long time immoveable with horror and aſtoniſhment; every tie of nature was broken, and nothing triumphed but rapine and vengeance.—Sons and wives turned informers: the former received as a reward, not only the property of their fathers, but dignities and honours; the latter celebrated at the ſame time the funeral of their betrayed huſbands, and their marriage with the new. Some, proſcribed only for their riches, firſt threw them to the populace, and then ſet fire to their houſes, and deſtroyed themſelves in the flames: ſome took refuge on the ſea, and were overwhelmed in it by adverſe fortune. Neither the Forum nor the Senate, nor the temples, any longer afforded an aſylum; no, nor even a mother's arms; for many, terrified by the penalties, drove

their proſcribed ſons from their boſom, as execrable and ill-fated. But thou, who threweſt away thy ſhield in the plains of Macedonia, well knoweſt what was the clemency of this maſter of thine, after that laſt day of the Roman liberty. Every one knows that he, unſkilled in war, conquered with another's arms, and that the praiſe of that victory belongs to Antony alone. But Octavius was reſolved to ſurpaſs all in cruelty to the vanquiſhed; the moſt illuſtrious of whom implored his mercy, an affection of which his heart was incapable: inſtead of it, he immediately gave orders for their maſſacre, and looked upon it with ferocious eyes. The groans of the dying were anſwered by him with the bittereſt ſcarcaſms. He inſulted and outraged them in the agonies of death: ſome, with their laſt breath, only aſked that their bodies might be buried; to whom he cruelly anſwered, "*The vultures ſhall be your grave.*" Scarcely had theſe barbarous words quitted his lips, when he ſaw a

 father

father and his ſon, proſtrate at his feet, ſupplicating for their lives. He commanded them to throw dice for it: which cruel inſult, changing them from ſupplicants to heroes, the father abandoned himſelf to his aſſaſſins; and the ſon, ſeizing a ſword, plunged it in his heart. The imperious conqueror beheld with ferocious pleaſure thoſe events, which it is melancholy even to relate. When afterwards fortune raiſed him to empire, although he was continually ſtyled merciful and wiſe, mild and beneficent, by thee, by the magnificent Agrippa, by the noble Virgil, the polite Ovid, and the dignified Mæcenas; yet, as in a tamed tiger its innate ferocity is eaſily awakened, ſo he ſhewed his wicked diſpoſition, diſſembled, but not ſubdued. Whence that reproof of Mæcenas was deſervedly celebrated, who, ſeeing him one day, in the Comitii, more thirſty than uſual after blood, and already prepared to condemn many to death, not being able to get near to him on account of the crowd, wrote

wrote on a table thoſe two memorable words, *Surge carnifex*, and threw it to him." Octavianus had ſilently liſtened to theſe accuſations with aſtoniſhing tranquillity; but here he interrupted, ſaying: "And I immediately roſe from my ſeat, and departed without anger. See if any other man raiſed by virtue or by fortune, to ſupreme power, ever endured ſuch free commands, or was ſo ready to obey them. This my generous diſpoſition made me deſerving of that kindneſs, which is denied to the powerful. I was reverenced without fear, praiſed from affection, and loved though holding a formidable ſceptre. I obtained the throne, it is true, by a deluge of blood; but ſo great an end could not, and never can be, obtained by the ordinary rules of common juſtice. Great enterpriſes, by their very nature, are always attended by extraordinary means, and terrible events." M. Brutus, ſtruck by theſe obſervations, raiſed his thoughtful countenance, fixed his angry eyes on Octavianus,

 and

and exclaimed: “ I now know that Rome was condemned by fate to inevitable ſlavery ; ſince, in recompence for my magnanimous action, ſhe had a worſe tyrant.” Then he turned his back, and trembling with anger, vaniſhed through the air. The words remained ſuſpended on the lips of Octavianus. “ O brave and free Brutus,” then Pollio exclaimed, “ ſtop, and confound by thy preſence this pair of tyrants !” So ſaying, he pointed imperiouſly to Octavius and Antony ; but the Shade was already plunged into the abyſs of death. Antony, with a degree of anger, ſaid: “ O gloomy ſpirit, who diſturbedſt with tedious accuſations theſe Shades, thou wouldſt certainly have been worſe than us on earth, if poſſeſſed of power, ſince thy heart is ſtill full of pride, and conſuming cares. If I had been as wicked as exalted fortune demands, Octavius would not have impoſed on my generoſity, which cauſed me to be always fearleſs in the field, and unſuſpicious in the Forum. But if it belonged

to any one, after the terrible Sylla, the great Pompey, and the generous Dictator, to guide the convulsed Republic; I was the person, who was unrivalled among the generals of my age." Octavius answered: "I believe there is no one here who is unacquainted with thy virtues in war; but there is also no one who does not recollect thy vices in peace. There never was a better general, nor a worse citizen. Thoughtless, effeminate, dissolute in common life; temperate, magnanimous, intrepid in the field. In proportion as thou wast skillful in acquiring supreme power, so wast thou unfit to support it." "How thou talkest!" interrupted Antony—"to whom wast thou indebted for the victory of Philippi? The Romans saw on that day, which was most worthy to govern them." "They saw also," replied Octavius, with a malicious smile, "which of us was most worthy at the battle of Actium?" At these words, Antony held down his head, so that his hair falling over his face, opportunely

tunely concealed the ſhame which ſuddenly overſpread it. At that moment I ſaw the magnanimous warrior, moved by noble thoughts, let go the fair hand of his miſtreſs, and remove to ſome little diſtance from her; but ſhe, well verſed in powerful allurements, went up to him, talking in a ſoothing manner. It was then ſtill more evident that the Triumvir was doomed to love her eternally; for, effeminately bending towards her, he gave, even amongſt the dead, a wretched proof of the meanneſs of his love. Then Octavius proceeded: "It would, in truth, have been a wonderful docility in you, O Romans! if ſuch a man, without dignity of manners, ſhould have commanded you, who was incapable of commanding himſelf. Recollect the time when my illuſtrious uncle, making war in Spain to extend your dominion, left him Governor of Italy. You never ſaw a ſtage-player behave with more inſolence: for, though inveſted with ſuch a high office, he was carried through the province

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in a chariot drawn by tame lions, and followed by his mistress the actress Citheris, in a litter. And when the Dictator, after the battle of Pharsalia, pursued his success, he had such confidence in him, that he gave him the Government of Rome. You saw him then surrounded with players and buffoons, overcome by intemperance, reel intoxicated through these streets, holding at the same time his drawn sword, and attended by satellites ready for plunder; with whom, like a robber in the forest, he filled the city with lamentations and terror. Even in the proscriptions he distinguished himself by a capricious avarice, when he included Nonius because he possessed an opal which he desired to have, and Verres because he refused him some Corinthian vases.

"O wretched country," exclaimed Cicero, "where those who for their wickedness deserved an ignominious death, perished in a manner which was proper only for

for the innocent! Hence, O wicked Verres, thoſe vaſes were much more fatal to thee than my accuſations." Octavius then turned to the illuſtrious orator, and modeſtly ſaid: "If a late repentance may here avail, to moderate thy reſentment of ancient injuries, know, O ſublime genius, that none of my actions gives me ſtill more ſincere remorſe, than my having ſacrificed thy life to his hatred." Cicero gravely replied: "And I am not ſo grieved at any error, as at my folly in giving credit to thy ſpecious diſſimulation. I was a Conſul advanced in years, grown old in the buſineſs of the State, well verſed in human affairs, accuſtomed to vices, diffident of virtues; yet I was ſo impoſed upon by thee, a deceitful youth, that I turned upon thee, not only my own hopes, but thoſe of all good citizens. To thee, as to the watch-tower, we looked in the convulſions of the tempeſt, till, led aſtray by thy treacherous light, we were overwhelmed and loſt. Now if thou wiſheſt to ſhew me any

kindneſs,

kindneſs, inſtead of vain excuſes for irreparable crimes, I entreat thee to continue to reprove this tyrant, againſt whom, when in life, I pronounced declamations, inſufficient indeed in the midſt of ſuch corruptions, but juſt, free, and magnanimous." Octavius was vexed that Cicero did not value his excuſes; yet, incited by his ancient enmity to Antony, he continued: "Scarcely hadſt thou obtained the victory of Philippi, when thou ſhewedſt thyſelf unworthy of it, by that diſgraceful diſſoluteneſs which rendered thee contemptible even to the vanquiſhed: for while the monarchs of the eaſt fell ſuppliant at thy feet, thou appointedſt collector of tributes in four cities in Aſia, the flute-player Anaxenor, who with inſatiable rapine cruelly deſolated them. Theſe exactions afforded thee, who waſt always greedy of other people's property, and prodigal of thy own, means to ſupport thy oſtentatious vices. If he who delighted thy ears, obtained ſo great a reward from thee, no leſs a one was acquired by a cook, who,

who, in a ſupper, ſo gratified thy intemperance, that he received as a recompence the property of a wealthy citizen of Magneſia. Thus collecting riches by rapine, thou afterwards diſſipatedſt them in diſſolute entertainments, and intemperate pleaſures; ſo that the cities where thou cameſt, reſounded with the groans of the oppreſſed, mixed with the fatal joy of the oppreſſors. Intoxicated with ſucceſs in Alexandria, in Athens, in Tarſus, habited like a bacchanalian, thou ſufferedſt vile flattery to call thee God, when thou no longer deſervedſt the name of man."—"Hear, O Romans!" then exclaimed Antony, "how boldly this man talks, who, when he ruled over ſo many nations, was terrified at idle dreams, timidly conſulted cheating fortune-tellers, ruled a vaſt empire by a vain obſervance of lucky and unlucky days, and finally, proud as Jove, and ſo called by the abject crowd, trembling concealed himſelf in the depths of his ſplendid palace, when the lightning darted through the heavens."

Unhappy

"Unhappy Romans!" cried Cicero, "ſee to what tyrants you were abandoned by perverſe fortune! Now that, in a barbarous conteſt, they here diſcover their vices in your preſence, they appear to have been more fit for gladiators in your amphitheatres than arbiters of your fate, and that of ſo great a part of the earth." As he pronounced theſe words, a few tears fell from his eyes, and grief was painted on his countenance; but this intereſting anxiety was reſerved, grave, compoſed, ſuitable to his dignity. Antony in the mean time went away, accompanied by his ſeducing Queen. The wind moved at the ſame time her veil and her hair, and the royal mantle of Antony floated over his vaſt ſhoulders. Octavius, angry and confuſed at the ſevere remarks of Cicero, retired through the crowd, taking along with him Horace, and other Shades who reſpected him. I imagined them to be Agrippa, Mecænas, and the others who, admiring his grandeur, forgot the crimes

on which it had been raiſed. Deſirous to be acquainted with their features, which are but imperfectly known to us by ancient monuments, I turned to queſtion my guide, the friendly Cicero; but when the words were already on my lips, there aroſe a ſudden tumult among the multitude.

SIXTH DIALOGUE.

The Parricide.

AS the calm of the ocean changes to a ſtorm, ſo the Shades were agitated with confuſion among the tombs, among the bones, and in the damp receſſes. The air trembled with an infinitude of confuſed and mournful ſighs, which, uniting together in melancholy concert, produced a moſt afflicting and lamentable ſound. There came, from the remoteſt extremity of the caves, a Spectre who, holding out his hands, appeared to implore the general compaſſion. Yet he obtained it not; but, as if his preſence were execrable, ſome threw their toga over their heads, ſome covered their eyes with both their hands, ſome turned their faces upon the ground, and all avoided him by flight. The earth alſo ſhook, the tombs trembled, the bones within them rattled againſt each other, and

a wind, the harbinger of an impending prodigy, roared through the caverns. The place was deserted: only that Spectre came forward who had put all the rest to flight: his look was youthful, and expressive of extreme grief; his eyes inspired terror; his countenance was obscured by mortal anguish; his hair rough and disordered; his mouth gasping for breath; his cheeks covered with tears; his figure wretched, and wasted by affliction. He seemed eagerly to desire to approach the flying crowd, and to strive to stop them by his groans. Ah lamentable sight, which should have inspired pity! but not a single Shade remained, and a mournful silence at length prevailed in those paths of death. I, forsaken by Cicero, as if exposed to a monster in a frightful desert, felt my accustomed courage die away in my breast. Those intrepid Spirits had fled; and it seemed, therefore, a rash perseverance in me, still the slave of death, to encounter that Spectre whom they had avoided. Perplexed by these

thoughts, I retired, without turning my back, keeping my eyes intent upon that Shade, who, in proportion as I retreated, advanced towards me over the ground I had forſaken. In the mean time, he kept his eyes eagerly fixed upon me, as if he were viewing ſome unuſual object. I perceived, when he was near me, that his hands were ſtreaming with blood; and though he continually ſtrove to wipe it away with his garments, yet it continued to guſh out as from a fountain. Round his breaſt was entwined a devouring ſerpent that, with poiſonous tongue, preyed upon his heart, which was viſible through a gaping wound, opened by that inceſſant gnawing, and which appeared to be convulſed with continual anguiſh. He walked ſlowly, becauſe his feet were impeded by chains, which clanked with a dreary ſound as he dragged them heavily along. Struck with horror, I turned away my trembling ſteps, not becauſe I was apprehenſive of any injury, but ſhocked at the cruel ſight; and

he, already near me, ſaid, in a faint voice: "Stay, O kind deſcendant, and have pity on the inexplicable anguiſh that I ſuffer." I ſtopped at theſe ſorrowful words, ready to ſhew any kindneſs in my power. When he ſaw that compaſſion prevailed in me, he proceeded in this lamentable manner: "Moſt generous art thou among mortals, ſince thou endureſt my preſence, and therefore thou muſt be inclined to pity the miſeries of others. Ah! then grieve for me, and know how deplorable is my deſtiny! Behold, I wander in the deſert of death, driven by the anguiſh of deſpair; I continually call for compaſſion, but the cries of my affliction are diſſipated in the ſilent darkneſs. I am preyed upon by a burning ſting, which perpetually agitates me with a tormenting delirium. If ſometimes in this ocean of ſilence I chance to meet ſome Shade, I turn to it with humble intreaties, to induce it to liſten to me, but all of them continually fly from me, mute and inexorable, and leave me bewildered in

in this immenſe wandering. Oh, ineffable miſery! to be forbidden to find any one who will liſten with commiſeration to the melancholy recital of my misfortunes!"

My mind remained divided between terror and compaſſion. I ſaw with horror, I heard with grief. Already the expreſſions of my heart ſtood on my trembling lips; already my thoughts were turned to comfort that unhappy wretch, when I beheld his hair agitated, and ſaw amongſt it fierce reptiles that hiſſed angrily. I perceived, O dreadful object! that his hair was mixed with aſps which, fixed in his head, twiſted themſelves round, and ſtrove to diſengage themſelves from it with their poiſonous fangs. The Spectre, driven to deſperation by the torture, endeavoured, with both his hands, to free himſelf from that inſufferable pain, but then the aſps fixed upon his hands and rendered them uſeleſs. Sometimes he tried to pluck from his heart that ſerpent which inſatiably preyed upon it; but

but here, in like manner, the aſſiſtance of his hand was fruitleſs, for upon them, with increaſed ferocity, did he turn his fangs. My breath remained ſuſpended in my throat, my words died away upon my tongue, at the atrocity of that puniſhment. He continued to look at me with eyes full of tears and terror, and with his hands covered with blood; and, with the foam of the ſerpents, ſhewed me the horrid tortures he endured, roaring, at the ſame time, like the tempeſtuous ocean; wherefore, overcome by commiſeration, I exclaimed: "What dreadful puniſhment is this to which thou art ſubjected, O moſt wretched of the dead!" He anſwered with a ſigh: "If thou wiſheſt, O kind auditor, to comprehend, as it were by conjecture and in a dream, my diſtreſs, know, that it reſembles what I felt when dying. I am always in the agonies of death, yet always alive to inſufferable and inexplicable torments, the power of which ſeems to be ever on the point of deſtroying me. I ar-

dently

dently deſire annihilation; I hate this immortality, which preſerves me to perpetual miſery. An extreme pain extinguiſhes in your limbs the ſenſe of feeling which agitates them; but this ſubſtance, of which I am formed, is always awake to anguiſh, always ſubject to immenſe torments." "Ah, on what account," inquired I then with tears, "art thou in ſo horrid a ſituation?" And he, with a groan, began as follows:

"Behold, at length, after the tedious revolution of ſo many ages, it is granted to me to give vent to my eternal ſorrow, by relating my crime to one who, if he does not pity that, pities at leaſt the penalty I ſuffer for it. O my father, who waſt the kind ſupporter of my infancy, and the director of my youth! to what end were thy friendly cares, and ſo much uſeful inſtruction? I was diſtinguiſhed among the youth of my time; I was even called happy in having ſuch a father. As a pilot, unacquainted

quainted with the ſea of life, I continually looked up to him, as the ſtar which was to direct me to traverſe it in ſafety. His affection was mixed with dignity, and mine tempered by reſpect. But, when I reached that age at which childiſh amuſements are thrown aſide, and that ſweet confuſion ariſes in the heart which makes it diſcontented with itſelf, and feel that it wants a certain ſatisfaction which it cannot deſcribe, I ſaw a young woman, whoſe ſoft eyes made an indelible impreſſion on my ſoul. She was ſitting at the games of Ceres, with other virgins and matrons; but her beauty outſhone them all, like the roſe which opens to the breath of ſpring. Whither doſt thou not drive our minds, O pernicious power of love! Periſh thoſe who praiſe thee as a ſoothing comfort, and a delightful invitation to ſocial life! thy terrible effects conſtrain men to endure evils, worſe than any ſavage life could occaſion. As ſoon, therefore, as that poiſon entered my breaſt, my mind, become weak, was

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eager after nothing but to contemplate the object that ruled over all my thoughts. Soon, aſſiſted by the arts of love, I came to enjoy, in her converſation, the ſoft words, the flattering proteſtations, the ſweet palpitations of ſhame, and the delicious thrill which it infuſes. The features of the damſel were of ſurpriſing beauty, her manners elegant, her voice tender, her words inſinuating; her eyes ſhone like ſtars, arbiters of my deſtiny; her lip was the ruler of my heart. Arrived thirſty at the fountain, I drank even to intoxication. O inſatiable delirium! O mortal delights! Immediately the ſmile of youth diſappeared from my lips, and my brow was clouded with gloomy cares. But ſhe, more beloved than loving, conſcious of her power and of my weakneſs, maintained her dignity with that ſweet tyranny which irritates deſire, and renders the heart ſtill more ſubmiſſive. Sometimes, therefore, with the incitements of perſuaſive language, ſometimes with languiſhing eyes, now with

affectionate

affectionate attentions, now with modeſt baſhfulneſs, now with diſtant reſerve, ſhe checked or ſlackened the rein of my ſlavery. I am now, too late, ſenſible of theſe artifices, which then appeared to me the delicate effects of ſincere affection. But ſuch a flame could not be ſatisfied but (where all are extinguiſhed) in marriage. For this I aſked my father's conſent, who oppoſed it with his ſevere authority, inexorable to my tears, deaf to the continual lamentations of my ill-fated love: not content with this, he intimated to me a terrible determination—that I ſhould gird the cuiraſs to my effeminate breaſt, and repair to Sicily, where at that time we were carrying on war. Overcome by pernicious idleneſs, I refuſed what no Roman ever refuſed before, to combat in the field; but the flame of glory was extinguiſhed in my heart, which was entirely occupied by that lighted by two dazzling eyes. At which cowardice, inconſolable were the complaints, tremendous the imprecations of my father,

father, who, grieved at having given me birth, as unworthy both of ſuch a country and of him. But this not ſufficing to cure my ignominious paſſion, he ſtrove to undeceive me, by diſcloſing to me the inſidious arts of my miſtreſs, her preceding fortunes, her doubtful character, her mean condition. My darkened underſtanding, however, inſtead of attending to theſe wiſe and juſt exhortations, hated them as tedious; hence, tormented by two ſources of pain, one which excluded me from the marriage-bed, and the other drove me to the field at a diſtance from the nuptial roſes, I felt a perverſeneſs, till then unknown, ariſe in my heart. The fury of atrocious thoughts convulſed my mind to a dreadful delirium; the flame of anger ran through my frame; my ſenſes were clouded by the bloody deſign; the tumult of care, goading me to ferocious madneſs, diſturbed me, eſpecially in the ſilent darkneſs. O night, above all, both paſt and to come, for ever execrable be, in which, awakened by barbarous inſanity, I turned

my trembling ſteps to my father's bed! This infamous hand graſped the dagger; my heart was as hard as the ſteel of which it was formed; all my nerves thrilled at the impending enormity: yet the atrocious delirium ſtimulated them to ſatiate themſelves by the cruel vengeance. I ruſhed, in a fit of deſperation, to the door of the chamber; and, though I opened it with inſidious caution, yet it creaked a little upon its hinges. Oh, that that noiſe had prevented the crime! My father lay, with the wretched woman who bore me, immerſed in the oblivion of ſleep. The night had paſſed the middle of its courſe; ſilence reigned in the ſtreets; only the thunder growled at a diſtance. Groping along, without the help of my ferocious eyes, I found the place where my father lay: already my knee was on the ſide of the bed, and my hand prepared to ſtrike. Thou ſeeſt I ſtill relate with tears the unhappy event. I heard him, in his ſleep, pronounce ſome confuſed words, amongſt which, however, I per-

ceived that he called me ſorrowfully by name. I ſtood breathleſs, and my trembling hand was withheld by ſudden compaſſion; my judgment was ſuſpended between the cruel purpoſe and the horrible effect: at length the latter prevailed, and the parricide dagger deſcended into my father's heart. The wretch, awakened at this unexpected circumſtance, ſhook himſelf, and filled the dark air with agonizing cries; the blood-ſtained bed ſhook; my mother was awakened by the mournful exclamations of her huſband, and, not fully comprehending the unknown misfortune, invoked the Gods, and called for her ſervants with tears. Fallen into the abyſs of wickedneſs, I no longer knew myſelf, and my mind was involved in darkneſs: weighed down by a ſenſe of my guilt, trembling, breathleſs, torn with anguiſh, I fled. A terrible voice exclaimed in my breaſt, and reproached me with my crime; I already heard the ſentence of Nature, who rejected me from her boſom; I felt already that I was become a deteſtable burden to

the earth: I therefore left the city, and no dwelling ſeemed ſo ſuitable to my diſtracted thoughts as a foreſt; I plunged myſelf into that of Tuſculum, where, roaming about, I howled like a wild beaſt; my eyes were two fountains of grief; my food was ſorrow; and when my body fainted through long abſtinence, I refreſhed it with the wild productions of the earth. The ſun, the froſt, the ſtorms, the rain, the wind, incommoded me in turn, as miniſters of the vengeance of Heaven. The thorns rent my clothes and my body; my hair became long, rough, and matted; I no longer dared to obſerve in the waters of the fountain, the reflexion of my countenance, become an object of horror even to myſelf. The night, which brings to all the balmy comforts of ſleep, even increaſed the fatal diſtraction of my diſordered imagination. I beheld her threatening Spectres wander through the murky air; the earth trembled under my feet, as hating to ſupport me. If, ſometimes oppreſſed by anguiſh, I lay me down to reſt in ſome cave, I

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did not taſte the pleaſures of ſleep, but was terrified by horrid dreams, full of frightful diſaſters, of confuſed atrocities, of diſtreſs, of ſlaughter, of blood. Thus tormented, I aroſe in the agonies of deſpair, always uncertain whether ſleep or watching was more fatal to me, and always driven from the one to the other. When the lightning flamed in the heavens, to me alone, as its mark, appeared to be directed its deſtroying fire. When the thunder re-echoed in the vallies, I fell proſtrate with terror, or, ſtooping and trembling, ſought refuge in the caves: nor was it neceſſary, in order to alarm me, for Heaven to diſplay the terrors of its empire; for the fluttering breeze which ruſtled amidſt the branches, appeared to me a wild beaſt ready to devour me, a hiſſing ſerpent, men lying in wait for me, or a divinity of the foreſt. Theſe cares were ſufficient to make life miſerable; but Heaven thought fit that I ſhould be deprived of it by a puniſhment ſtill more dreadful. One day, towards noon, as,

parched by thirſt, I was going from the foreſt to a river, I was taken, and led before the Prætor; I did not deny my crime, of which indeed the proofs were clear. According to our cuſtom, I was encloſed in a leathern ſack, with a viper, a maſtiff, an ape, and a cock; thus confined, with ſuch executioners, I was thrown to the mercy of the waves. My crime was certainly deteſtable, but that puniſhment was equally ſo! Without light, without air, without a reſting-place, I was expoſed to the fluctuating rage of the billows: they are formidable even to the ſkilful pilot, who braves them in a well-built veſſel; think then, how much more ſo they were to me, already ſhipwrecked in the furious ocean, in ſo frail a bark, expiring with many tortures, each more cruel than the reſt; agoniſing, to be torn to pieces by angry brutes, expoſed naked to their claws and teeth, and to have with them a common grave! The greedy jaws of the maſtiff ſeized the moſt fleſhy parts of my body; the ſerpent glided

glided over them with his cold ſcales, and then, twining himſelf round my neck, almoſt choked my difficult reſpiration. I ſtrove to prevent it with my hands; but the angry reptile then turned his fangs to my eyes, which, already deprived of light, and full of blood, were extinguiſhed in my forehead. In the mean time, the chill of death ran through my limbs. In fine, all thoſe cruel inſtruments and companions of my puniſhment, ſeemed to revenge upon me the torments they ſuffered. Hence all my attempts at defence were vain, or rather provoked them to new rage; for if I tried to take off the greedy mouth of the maſtiff, ſo much more obſtinately did he keep his hold; the ape and the cock, with their claws and their teeth, rent my body, ſo that the ſack was full of blood. But the furious conflict of the animals, and the violence of the waves, burſt the ſack. I thought this event fortunate, when I breathed the free air: I did not, however, behold the heavens, for the ſight of

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my eyes was extinguiſhed. Even this wretched conſolation was ſhort; for, overpowered by the waves, I deſcended into the abyſs, and my ſoul left my lacerated body, I know not whether more deteſtable to myſelf or to others, but, certainly, of all the moſt miſerable.

While he was thus relating his miſeries, the ſerpents hiſſed, erecting themſelves on his head, and drops of blood diſtilled from his eyes. I, from compaſſion, felt a cold chill at my heart, and warm tears flowed down my cheeks. But he ſuddenly replunged himſelf into the abyſs of eternity, and diſappeared among the tombs. I remained immerſed in darkneſs, ſcarcely knowing whether I were in the number of the living. Then, feeling my way towards the accuſtomed iſſue, I ſaw the ſky, and breathed, as I ſtill continue to do, the vital air. But when I had ſcarcely recovered myſelf after the tremendous apparitions, my moſt preſſing care was carefully to

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commit to paper, though in an humble ſtyle, theſe converſations, worthy of the moſt eloquent pen. The mediocrity of the language in which they are expreſſed cannot, however, do them ſo much injury, that the Roman pride will not clearly appear in them. Wherefore now, turning back my thoughts to arrange the opinions I had heard from the Romans themſelves concerning their merit, my mind concluded that they were great, rather than good; illuſtrious, rather than happy; by their conſtitution, oppreſſors; aſtoniſhing for their good fortune, by nature deſtroyers, generous in wickedneſs, heroes in injuſtice, magnanimous in cruelty: through which fatal illuſions, ſo loud is ſtill the report of their fame, that it intimidates the judgment of the multitude, and drowns the voice of the wiſe. I therefore moderated my high opinion of the Roman people; ſo that, without leſſening my admiration for their incredible actions, I however, judged it fortunate for the tranquillity of the world,

world, that a nation who ſought to poſſeſs the whole of it, and was always diſturbing it, had at length been overcome by the hand of Time.

FINIS.